明日の王様

Ashita no Ousama

谷地恵美子

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集英社文庫

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明日の王様 6

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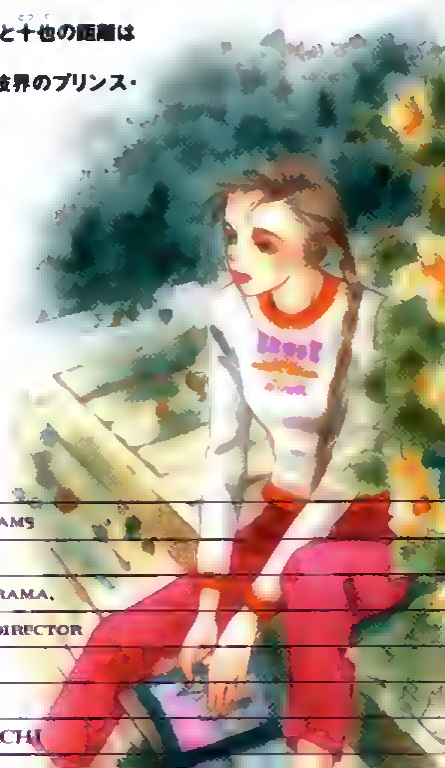
2人きりの稽古が進むにつれて、有と十也の距離は
急接近…！　有と十也、歌島と歌舞伎界のプリンス・
春之輔、2つの「逆鱗の紋」が
いよいよ上演される！
有のステージ・ロマン、感動の
クライマックス!!

連載エッセイ「みーは一E B I」収録



YU HAS FOUND
THE STAGE FULL OF DREAMS
AND HAPPINESS
FASCINATED BY MAGIC OF THE DRAMA,
SHE STRUGGLES TO BE A STAGE DIRECTOR
AND SCRIPTWRITER
THIS IS HER DRAMA
PRESENTED BY EMIKO-YACHI

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谷地恵美子

by Yachi Emiko

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6

CONTENTS

UNIT 44 4

UNIT 45 31

UNIT 46 72

UNIT 47 101

UNIT 48 141

UNIT 49 167

UNIT 50 197

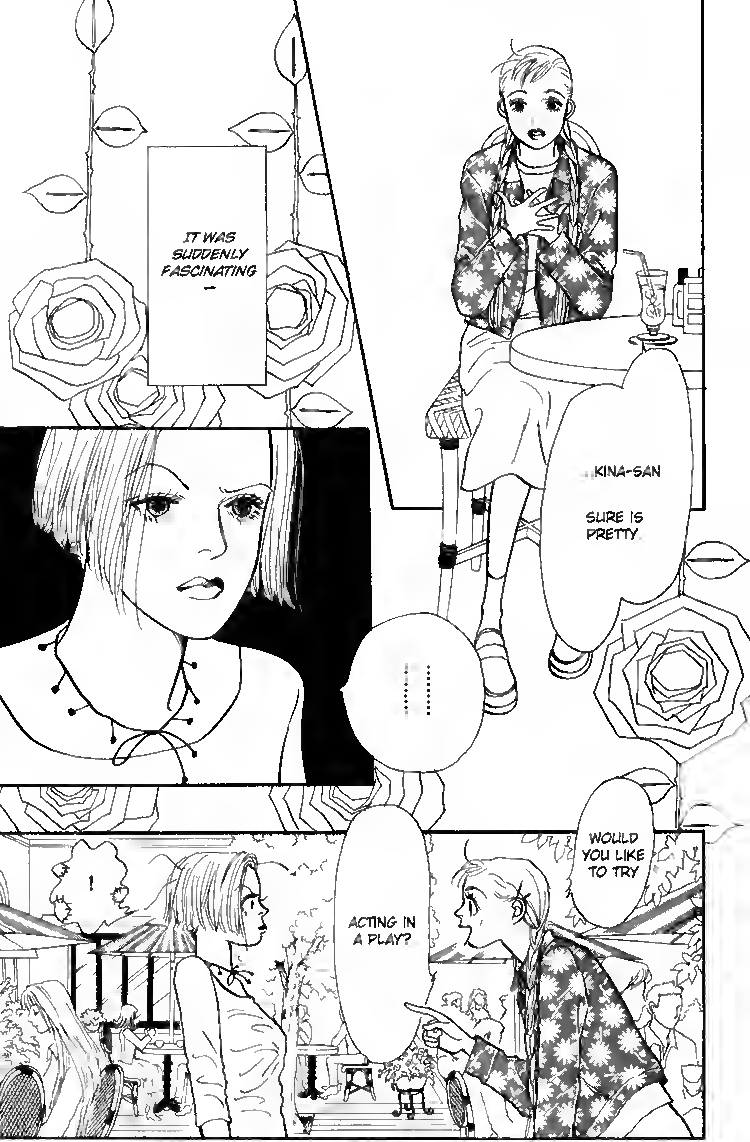
UNIT 51 224

UNIT 52 250

UNIT 53 275

連載エッセイ
みーはー E・B・I 306

ASHITA NO OUSAMA
明日の王様 6
UNIT 44
谷地恵美子



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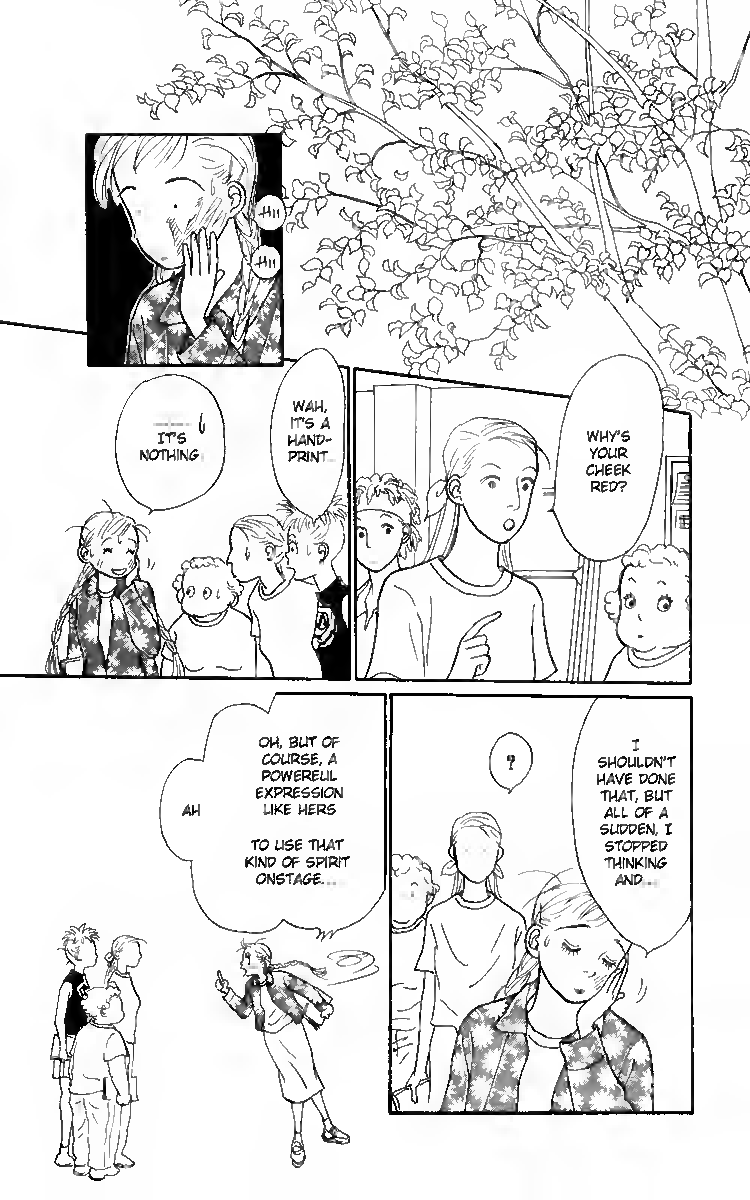
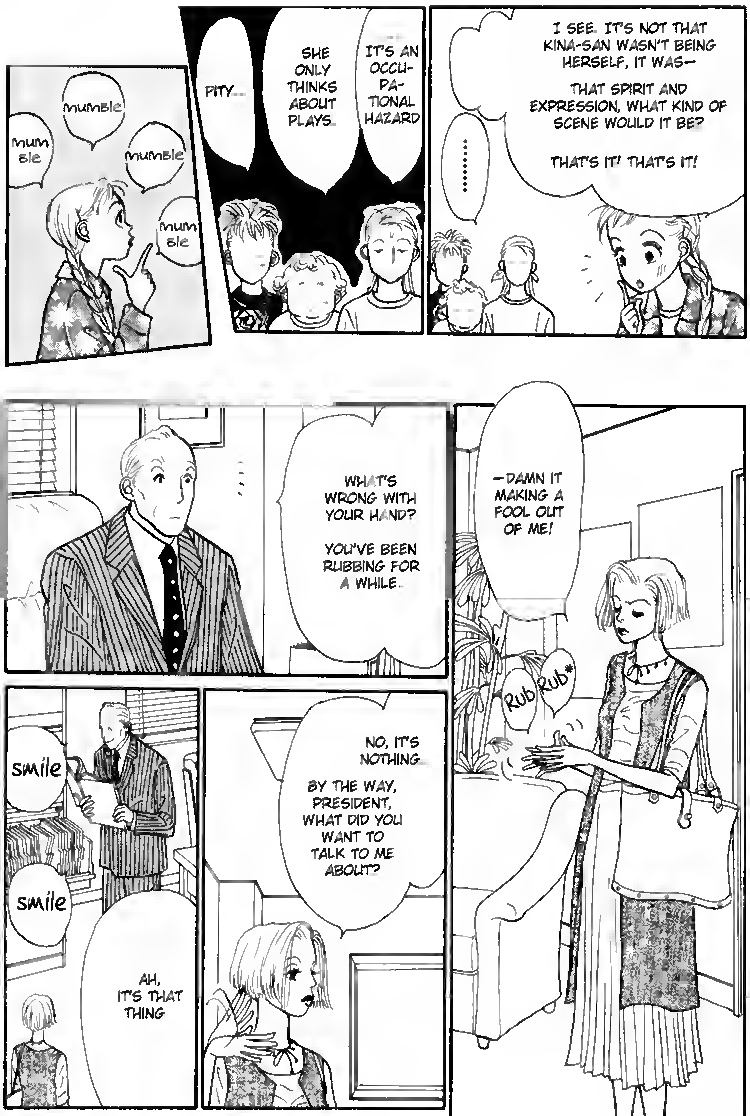
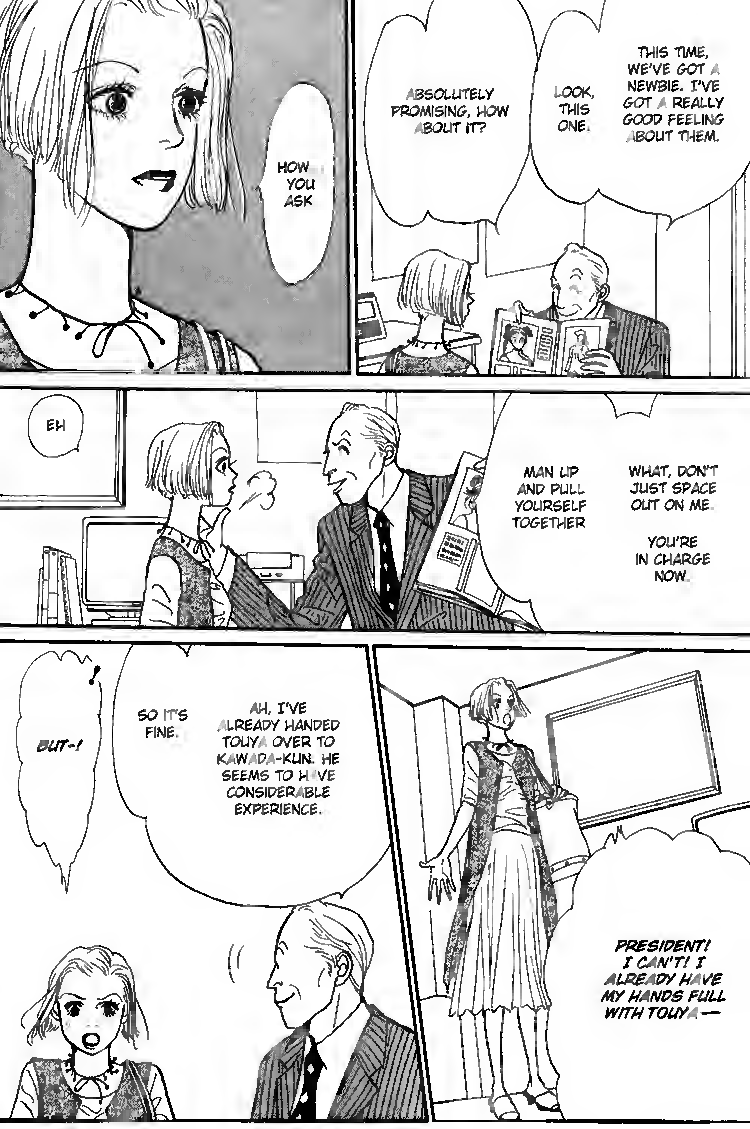
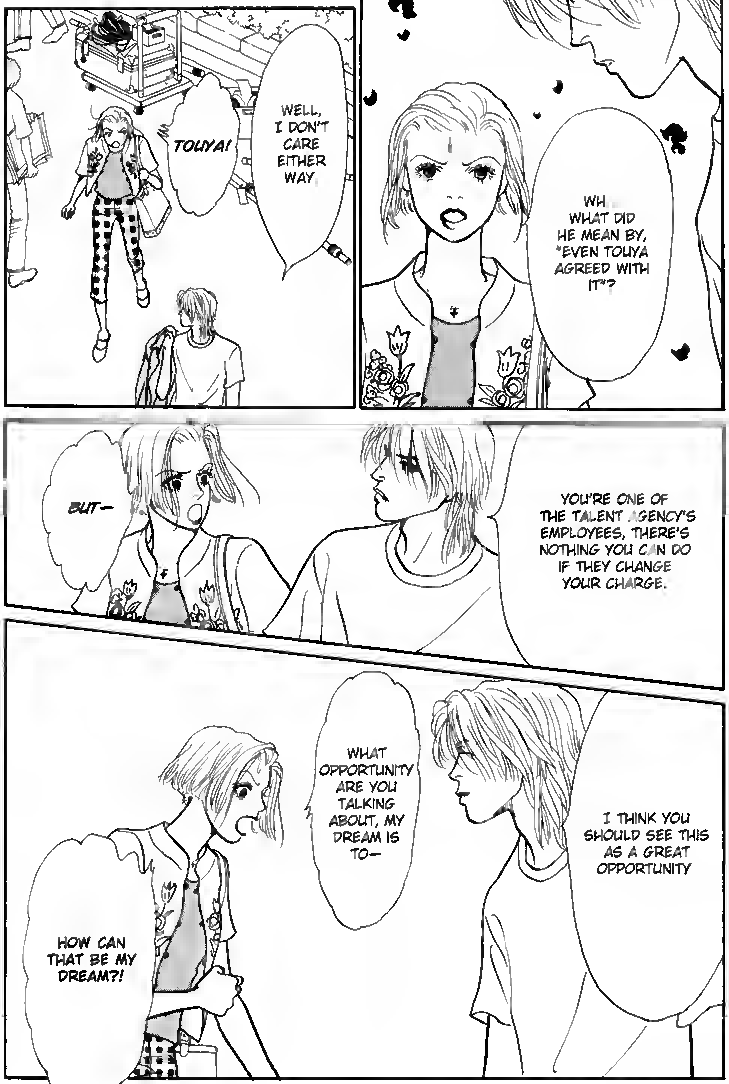

HII
HII
WAH, IT'S A HAND-PRINT
IT'S NOTHING
WHY'S YOUR CHEEK RED?
I SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT, BUT ALL OF A SUDDEN, I STOPPED THINKING AND...
?
AH
OH, BUT OF COURSE, A POWERFUL EXPRESSION LIKE HERS
TO USE THAT KIND OF SPIRIT ONSTAGE...


mumble
mum ble
mumble
mum ble
PITY...
SHE ONLY THINKS ABOUT PLAYS.
IT'S AN OCCU-PA-TIONAL HAZARD
I SEE. IT'S NOT THAT KINA-SAN WASN'T BEING HERSELF, IT WAS—
THAT SPIRIT AND EXPRESSION, WHAT KIND OF SCENE WOULD IT BE?
THAT'S IT! THAT'S IT!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR HAND?
YOU'VE BEEN RUBBING FOR A WHILE.
—DAMN IT MAKING A FOOL OUT OF ME!
Rub Rub*
smile
smile
AH, IT'S THAT THING
NO, IT'S NOTHING.
BY THE WAY, PRESIDENT, WHAT DID YOU WANT TO TALK TO ME ABOUT?

*TS Note: A slight *Macbeth* reference? Maybe we just have plays on our minds too


HOW YOU ASK
ABSOLUTELY PROMISING, HOW ABOUT IT?
LOOK, THIS ONE.
THIS TIME, WE'VE GOT A NEWBIE. I'VE GOT A REALLY GOOD FEELING ABOUT THEM.
EH
MAN UP AND PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER
WHAT, DON'T JUST SPACE OUT ON ME.
YOU'RE IN CHARGE NOW.
BUT-!
SO IT'S FINE.
AH, I'VE ALREADY HANDED TOUYA OVER TO KAWADA-KUN. HE SEEMS TO HAVE CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE.
PRESIDENT! I CAN'T! I ALREADY HAVE MY HANDS FULL WITH TOUYA—

INDEED
I BELIEVE THAT RAISING A ROOKIE WITH YOUR OWN HANDS IS WORTH DOING
And with an especially promising one eh
Yes, yes


WELL, I DON'T CARE EITHER WAY.
TOUYA!
WH WHAT DID HE MEAN BY, "EVEN TOUYA AGREED WITH IT"?
YOU'RE ONE OF THE TALENT AGENCY'S EMPLOYEES, THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO IF THEY CHANGE YOUR CHARGE.
BUT—
I THINK YOU SHOULD SEE THIS AS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY
WHAT OPPORTUNITY ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, MY DREAM IS TO—
HOW CAN THAT BE MY DREAM?!

DREAM?
I-
I DIDN'T GET TO TELL YOU ABOUT THIS PROPERLY, BUT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN GRATEFUL.
I'VE REALLY BEEN THINKING ABOUT YOU A LOT.
THE OLD ME WHO HAD NEVER KNOWN ABOUT THE WORLD OUTSIDE THE STAGE, TRYING TO RISE THROUGH THE INDUSTRY, WAS STUMBLING AROUND RANDOMLY. IT WAS ONLY WHEN KINA CAME THAT I COULD MOVE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

—YOU SAY THAT EVEN THOUGH YOU NEVER WANTED IT FROM THE BEGINNING
YOU CAN'T SERIOUSLY BELIEVE THAT AFTER WE'VE COME THIS FAR...
AND YET, THAT'S THE "PRINCESS" KINA I KNOW SINCE WE WERE KIDS.
THAT "PRINCESS" WHO, FOR THE SAKE OF THIS SINGLE TALENT, STOPPED THINKING OF HER IMAGE AND RAN AROUND TO SO MANY PLACES,
BOWING HER HEAD AND LOWERING HER VOICE—
THE TRUTH IS, I THOUGHT YOU WERE AMAZING.

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I THINK YOU'RE STRONG ENOUGH.
IN THE BEGINNING, IT WAS PROBABLY ALL BECAUSE OF ME, BUT
SOONER OR LATER, YOU'LL HAVE TO ENTER THE NEXT STAGE. ISN'T THIS A GOOD TIME FOR THAT?
BUT TOUYA, DON'T

YOU NEED ME ANYMORE?

HOT
IS IT REALLY OK? THE OTHER MEMBERS WON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA?
AND THIS ONE'S FOR YOU
IT'S FINE! I NEEDED TO BUY A LOT OF STUFF, SO I SHOULD BE THANKFUL I COULD SHOP WHILE WE'RE OUT TOGETHER
yeah and I can get extra GOODIES
Then,
I shall not hesitate

FOR KAZUMA-SAN'S PLAY?!
Pat's Burg
YES,
THIS FALL HAS A REPRODUCTION OF "BLIGHTED LEAVES" AND I'VE MENTIONED THAT I WANT TO DO THE ROLE OF "KOTOHA".

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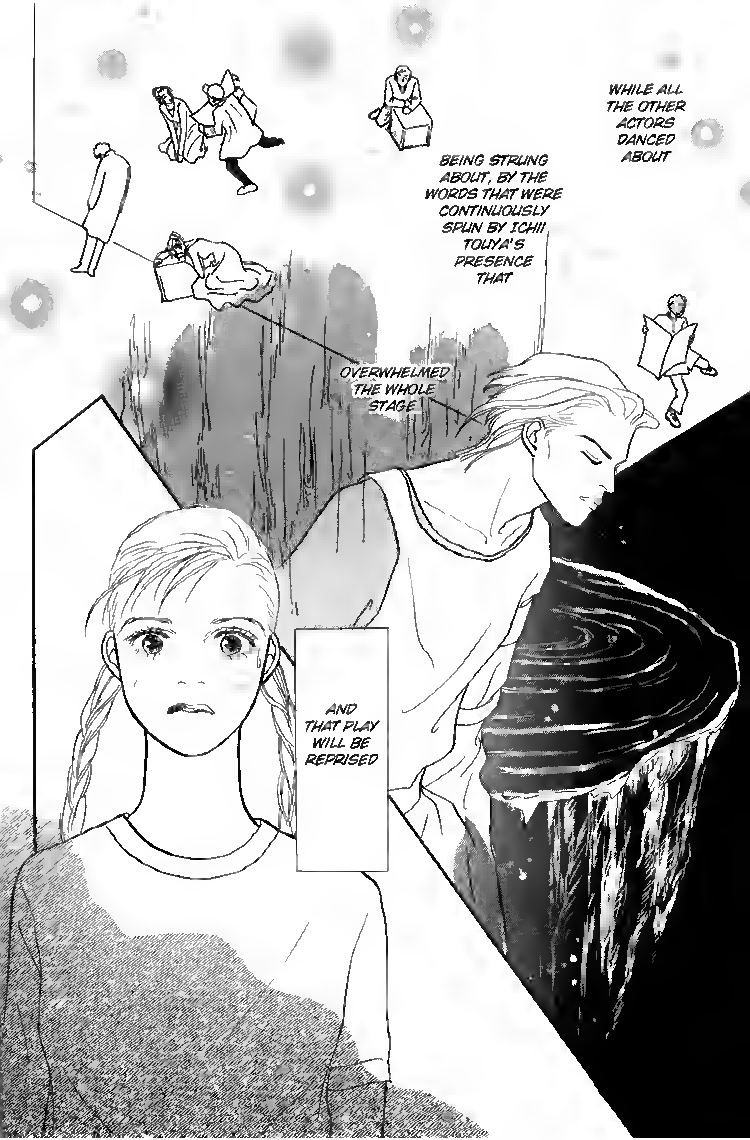
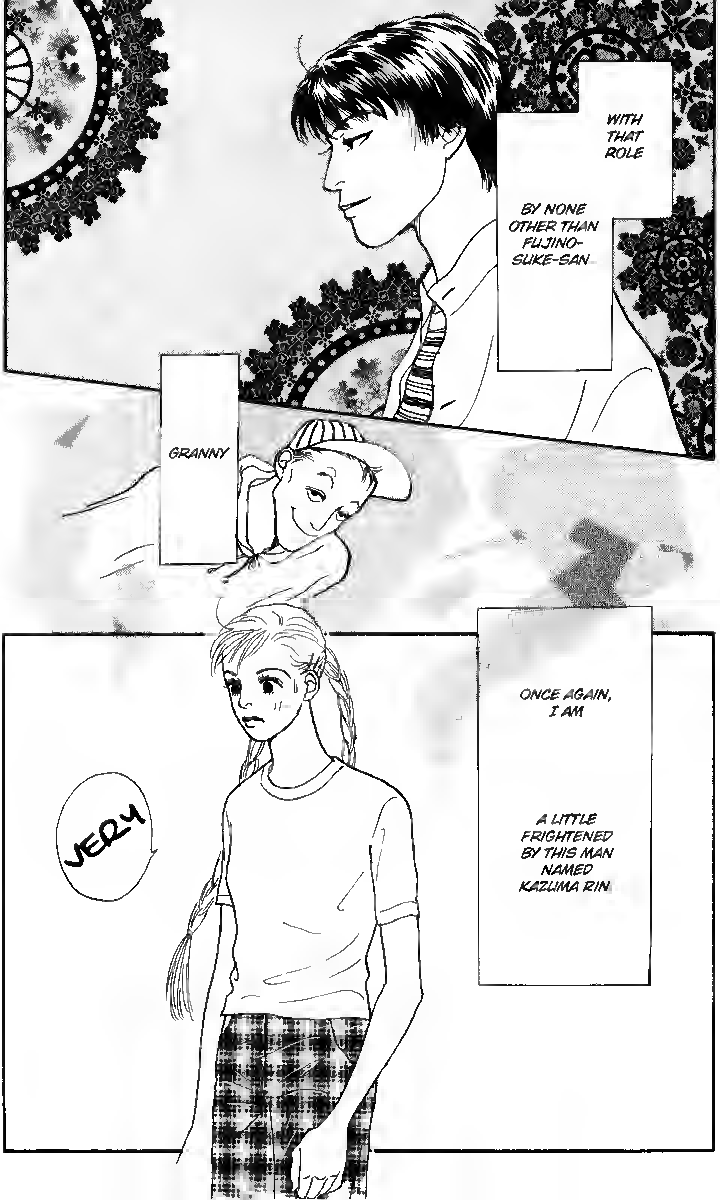
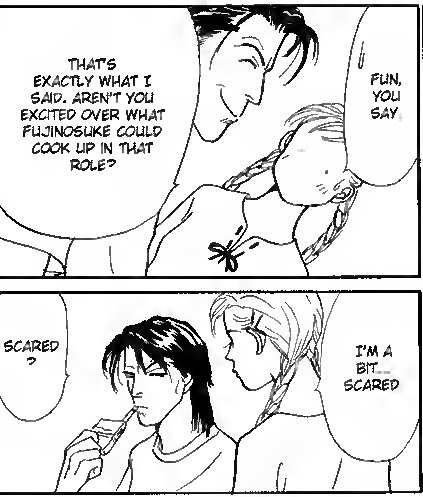
YES, IT'S THE ROLE THAT TOUYA-SAN PLAYED, ISN'T IT?
OH— I SEE
THIS TIME THEY INCLUDED SOME NEW ARRANGEMENT BUT
KAZUMA-SAN SAID, "NO ONE BUT SAWAMURA FUJINOSUKE WOULD BE ABLE TO CREATE AN ORIGINAL 'KOTOHA' "

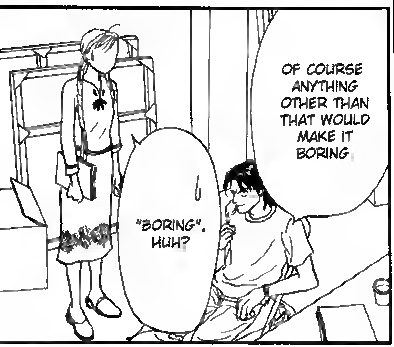
EVEN I THINK I SHALL BE HAVING A LOT OF FUN.
I'M ALREADY GETTING STRANGELY EXCITED OVER IT, WONDERING HOW I SHOULD ACT IT OUT.
YOU WILL DEFINITELY WATCH IT, RIGHT?
AH... YES.
.....

"BLIGHTED LEAVES"
KAZUMA RIN'S POWERFUL AND ASTOUNDING PLAY
THE REMARKABLY PROFOUND CHARACTER, "KOTOHA"
AND AT THE CENTER OF IT,
COMPLETELY RESTRICTED TO ONE SPOT, UNMOVING
WITH NOTHING TO ACT OUT EXCEPT FOR THE SPOKEN LINES
THE PLAY'S PIVOTAL ROLE


WHILE ALL THE OTHER ACTORS DANCED ABOUT
BEING STRUNG ABOUT, BY THE WORDS THAT WERE CONTINUOUSLY SPUN BY ICHII TOUYA'S PRESENCE THAT
OVERWHELMED THE WHOLE STAGE
AND THAT PLAY WILL BE REPRISED


WITH THAT ROLE
BY NONE OTHER THAN FUJINO-SUKE-SAN
GRANNY
ONCE AGAIN, I AM
A LITTLE FRIGHTENED BY THIS MAN NAMED KAZUMA RIN
VERY





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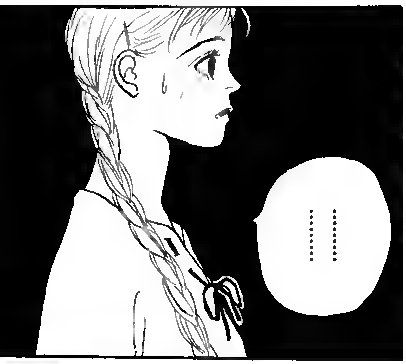
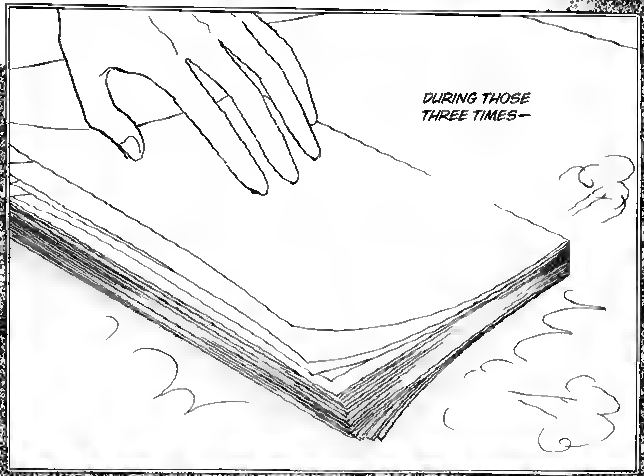
Ku.ku.ku
Secret training. What kind of training, I wonder?
"THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS".
TRA... TRAIN... ING
S... SECRET ...
!
BY THE WAY, IS THAT SECRET TRAINING WITH TOUYA GOING WELL?
I'VE GOT A HELLAVA PAIR OF EARS AND EYES, ALL RIGHT.
Y...
YOU KNOW ABOUT IT, CHIEF?
OH, I JUST HAPPENED TO SEE IT.
Sorry for bein' nice
ESPECIALLY FOR ME, RIGHT?
YES, JUST ABOUT THREE TIMES SO FAR—
I HEARD YOU CAN'T MEET WITH TOUYA OUTSIDE OF HIS SCHEDULE


.....

WELL, THERE'S NO HURRY, IF YOU CAN FINISH IT EVENTUALLY THEN ITS FINE.

BUT


DURING THOSE THREE TIMES—

TOWA-SAN
WE'VE JUST STARTED RECENTLY, HAVEN'T WE, SO WHY NOT TAKE IT BIT BY BIT—
...IT'S NOT A PROBLEM OF FREQUENCY.
AS IT IS, PLAYING THIS—

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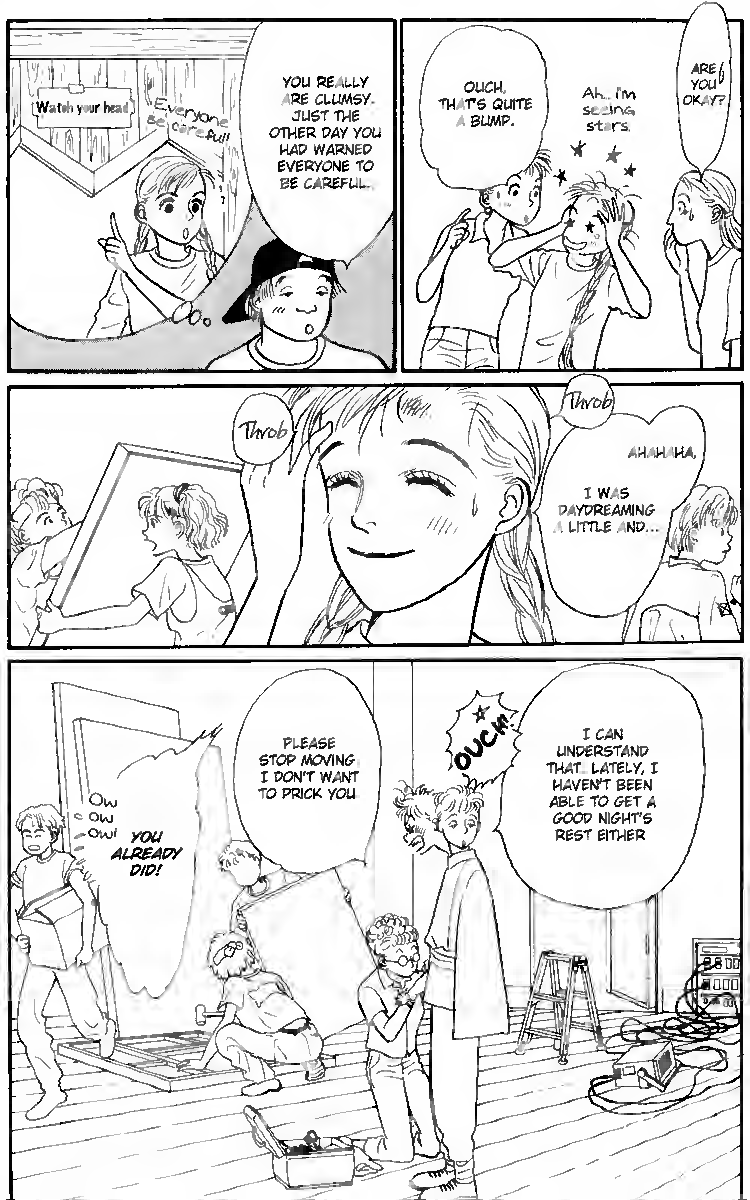
THAT ROLE THAT TOUYA SAN PLAYED WILL BE REPRISED BY SAWAMURA FUJINOSUKE.
DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT FOR—
SYUKESH

明日の王様

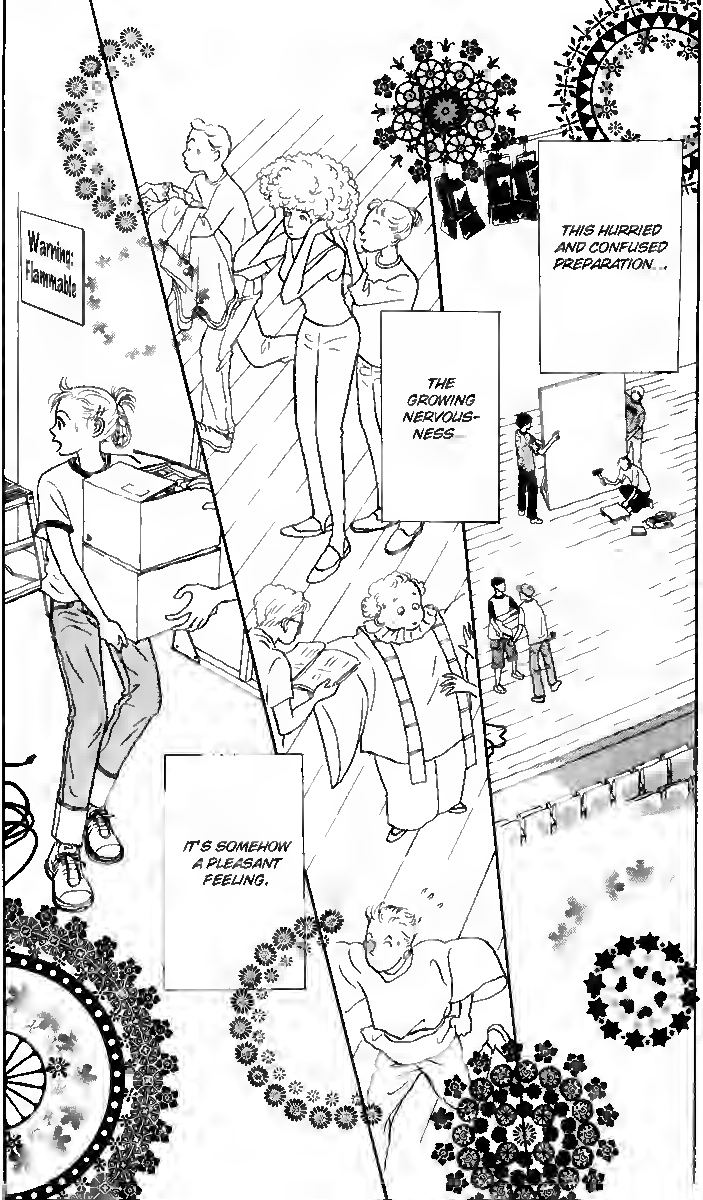
UNIT 45

IT ISN'T THAT STRANGE FOR A PLAY TO BE REOPENED WITH DIFFERENT ACTORS.
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING WHAT KIND OF PLAY THIS "BLIGHTED LEAVES" WILL BECOME.
TOUYA-SAN, JUST ONE MORE QUESTION—
TOUYA-SAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT FUJINOSUKE-SAN—
RECENTLY THE MEDIA HAS BEEN REALLY PERSISTENT HAVEN'T THEY?
ESPECIALLY WHEN IT CONCERNS FUJINOSUKE.
AH, BUT NO NEED TO WORRY, TOUYA-SAN.
WORRY ABOUT WHAT?
NO MATTER WHO ELSE DOES IT, TOUYA-SAN'S "BLIGHTED LEAVES" IS STILL THE BEST!

NO, WELL I DIDN'T SEE IT, BUT...
HMM, YOU SAW THAT PERFORMANCE?
SMACK
OWWWW
MY HEAD!


Watch your head
Everyone be careful!
YOU REALLY ARE CLUMSY. JUST THE OTHER DAY YOU HAD WARNED EVERYONE TO BE CAREFUL.
OUCH, THAT'S QUITE A BUMP.
Ah... I'm seeing stars.
ARE YOU OKAY?
Throb
Throb
AHAHAHA, I WAS DAYDREAMING A LITTLE AND...
PLEASE STOP MOVING I DON'T WANT TO PRICK YOU
OUCH!
I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT. LATELY, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET A GOOD NIGHT'S REST EITHER
Ow
Ow
Ow!
YOU ALREADY DID!

GRANNY,
IN PREPARATION FOR THE OPENING PERFORMANCE JUST TWO DAYS AWAY,
WHAT?
YOU'RE STILL WORKING ON THAT STUFF? HURRY IT UP, OR WE AREN'T GONNA MAKE IT!
GARANDOU IS SO BUSY RIGHT NOW THAT IT WOULD MAKE YOUR HEAD SPIN
WHAT'S WITH THE BAND-AID?
MO- MOSQ UITO!
A MOSQ UITO BITE!
Slap
Slap
BUT


Warning: Flammable
THIS HURRIED AND CONFUSED PREPARATION...
THE GROWING NERVOUSNESS...
IT'S SOMEHOW A PLEASANT FEELING.

"WE'RE FINALLY HERE."
— THAT FEELING OF ACHIEVEMENT
"IT ALL STARTS FROM HERE "
— THAT NEW FEELING OF NERVOUSNESS AND DREAD.
THE COUNTDOWN UNTIL THE CURTAIN RISES STARTS RINGING IN OUR EARS
THE MOMENT WHEN THE GOAL AND THE START BECOME ONE AND THE SAME
WELL,
I LIKE IT QUITE A BIT.

I forgot my lines
B-BE RIGHT BACK, TOILET!
Noisy
AH MY HEART'S GONNA STOP
M-MY STOM ACH
It hurts
W-WATER!
SASAYA-SAN, STOMACH MEDICINE ...
STOP YOUR WHINING! THE CURTAIN RISES IN ONE MINUTE.
GET GOING!
Grow!
HURRY.

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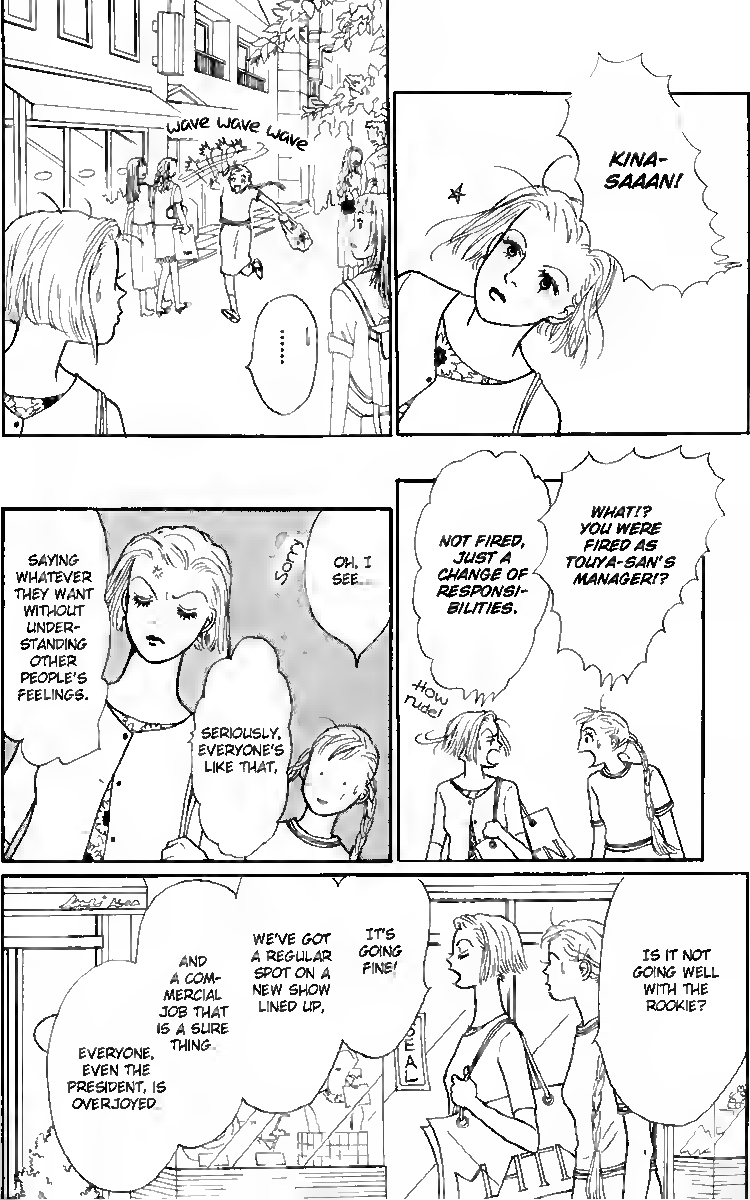
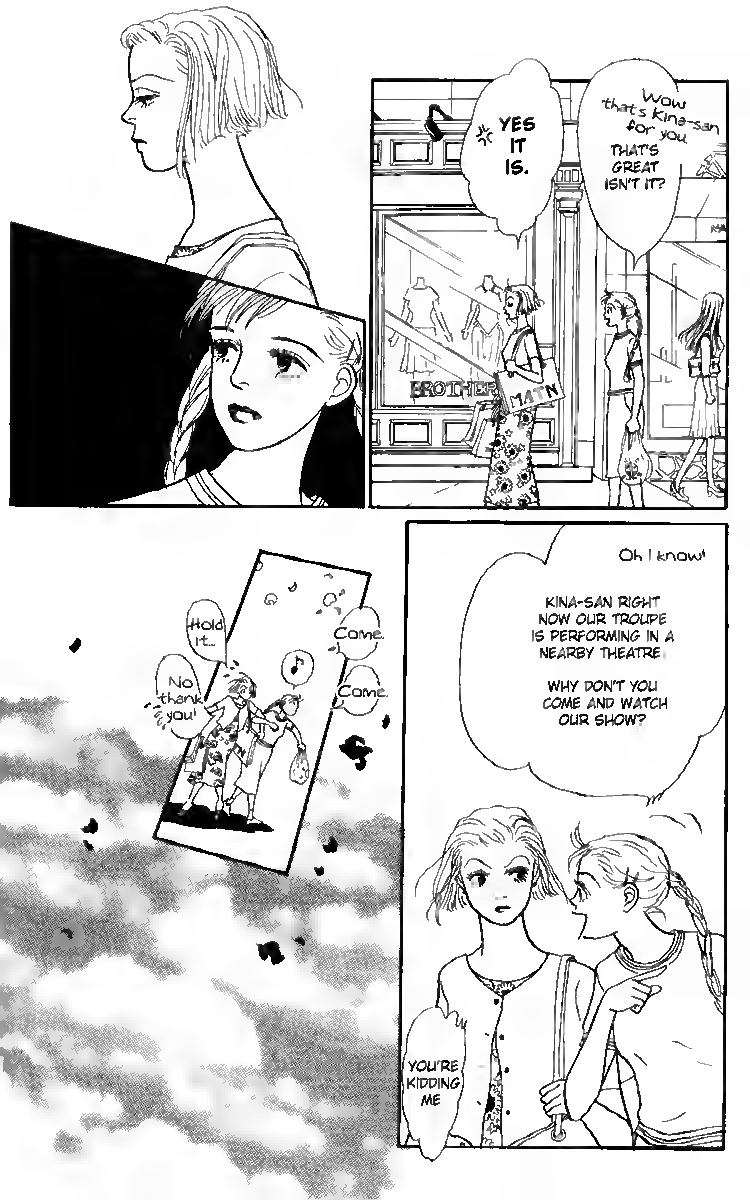
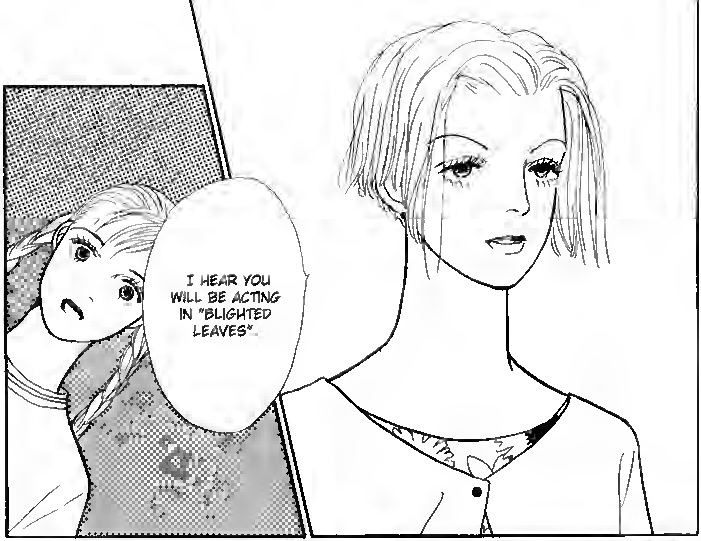
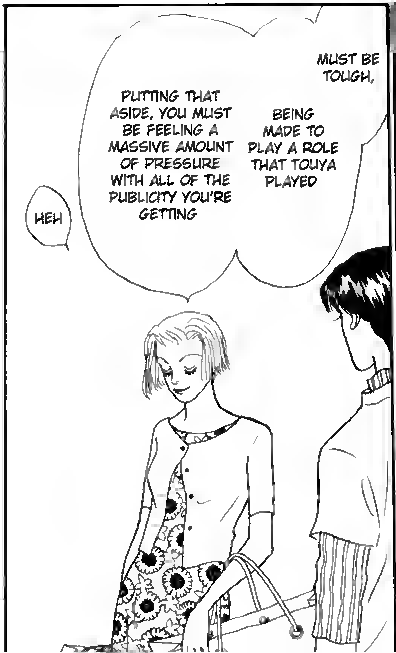

wave wave wave
.....
KINA-SAAAN!
WHAT!? YOU WERE FIRED AS TOUYA-SAN'S MANAGER!?
NOT FIRED, JUST A CHANGE OF RESPONSI-BILITIES.
How rude!
OH, I SEE.
Sorry
SERIOUSLY, EVERYONE'S LIKE THAT.
SAYING WHATEVER THEY WANT WITHOUT UNDER-STANDING OTHER PEOPLE'S FEELINGS.
IS IT NOT GOING WELL WITH THE ROOKIE?
IT'S GOING FINE!
WE'VE GOT A REGULAR SPOT ON A NEW SHOW LINED UP,
AND A COM-MERCIAL JOB THAT IS A SURE THING.
EVERYONE, EVEN THE PRESIDENT, IS OVERJOYED.


YES IT IS.
Wow that's kina-san for you
THAT'S GREAT ISN'T IT?
BROTHER
Hold it.
No thank you!
Come.
Come.
Oh I know!
KINA-SAN RIGHT NOW OUR TROUPE IS PERFORMING IN A NEARBY THEATRE.
WHY DON'T YOU COME AND WATCH OUR SHOW?
YOU'RE KIDDING ME

You said you had today off didn't you?
DON'T SAY THAT SOMETIMES A CHANGE OF SCENERY IS NECESSARY.
PLUS IT'S A GREAT PLAY! I HIGHLY RECOMMEND IT
I DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO BE WATCHING PLAYS.
CUT IT OUT
DON'T JUST GO RECOMMENDING THINGS AS YOU PLEASE
COLLIDE
AH♪
FUJINO-SLIKE-SAN

AH
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMING.
SOME TIME FINALLY OPENED UP, SO I CAME TO SEE THE SHOW TODAY IS THE LAST DAY RIGHT? I'M GLAD I WAS ABLE TO MAKE IT
KINA-SAN, THIS IS KABUKI'S—
FORMER*
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU FUJINOSUKE-SAN, THIS IS KITAZAWA KINA-SAN. ICHII TOUYA-SAN'S MANAGER.
I KNOW WHO HE IS SAWAMURA FUJINO-SUKE-SAN, RIGHT?




HEH
PUTTING THAT ASIDE, YOU MUST BE FEELING A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF PRESSURE WITH ALL OF THE PUBLICITY YOU'RE GETTING
MUST BE TOUGH, BEING MADE TO PLAY A ROLE THAT TOUYA PLAYED

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HEH
Let me return the favor
IT'S NOT THE LEAST BIT DIFFICULT.
I'M ENJOYING IT MORE THAN ANYTHING I'VE DONE BEFORE.
I DID NOT SEE TOUYA-SAN'S PERFORMANCE BUT
I WILL GIVE A PERFORMANCE THAT WILL MAKE YOU FORGET ALL ABOUT TOUYA-SAN'S

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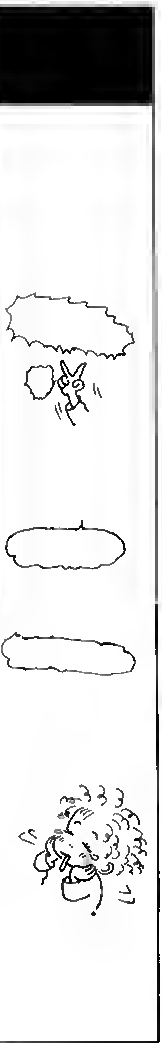
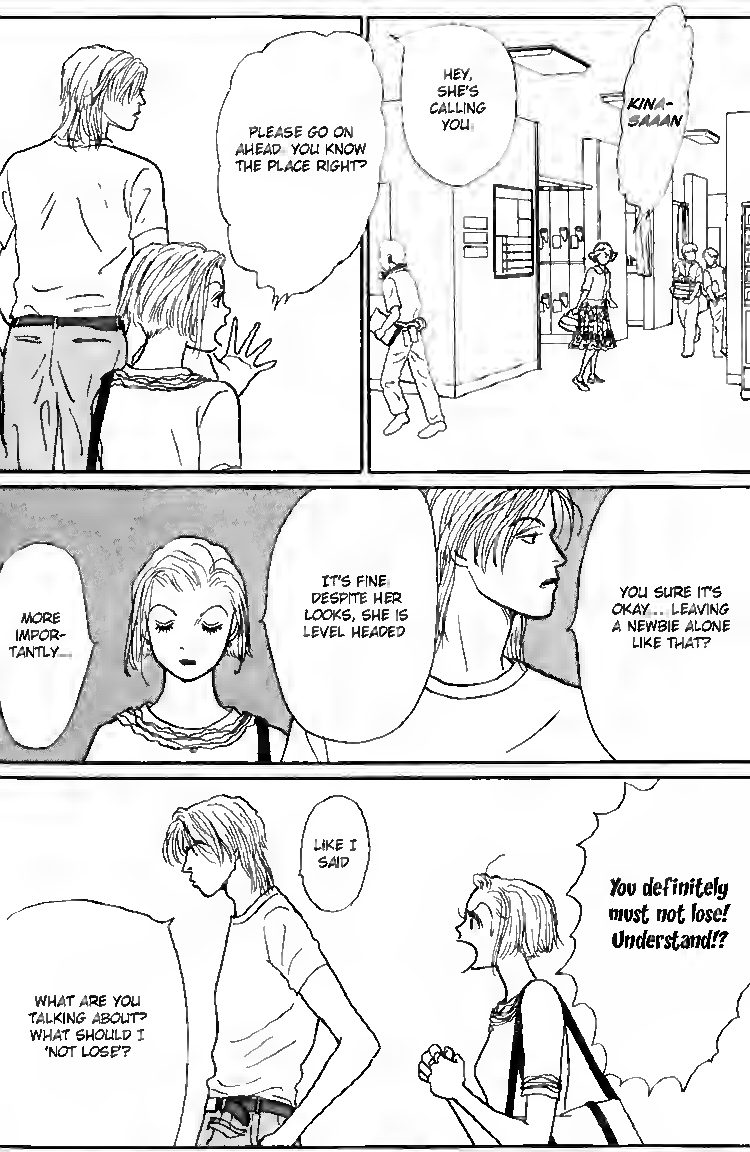
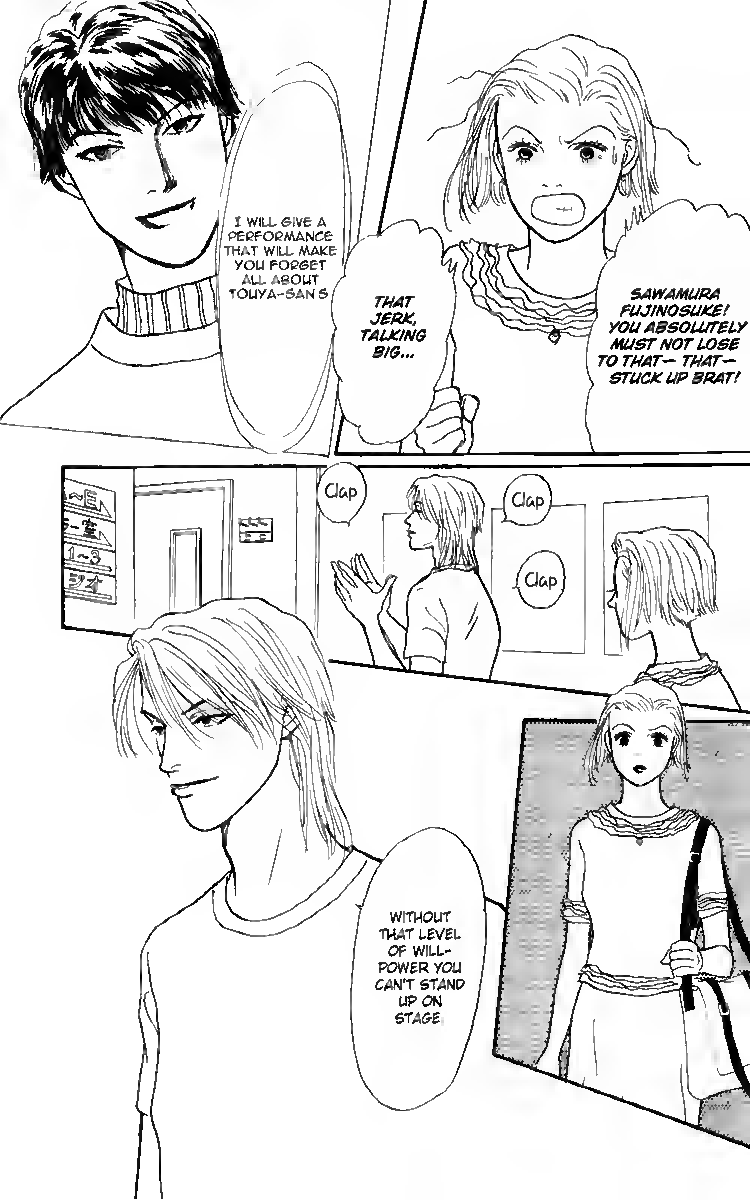


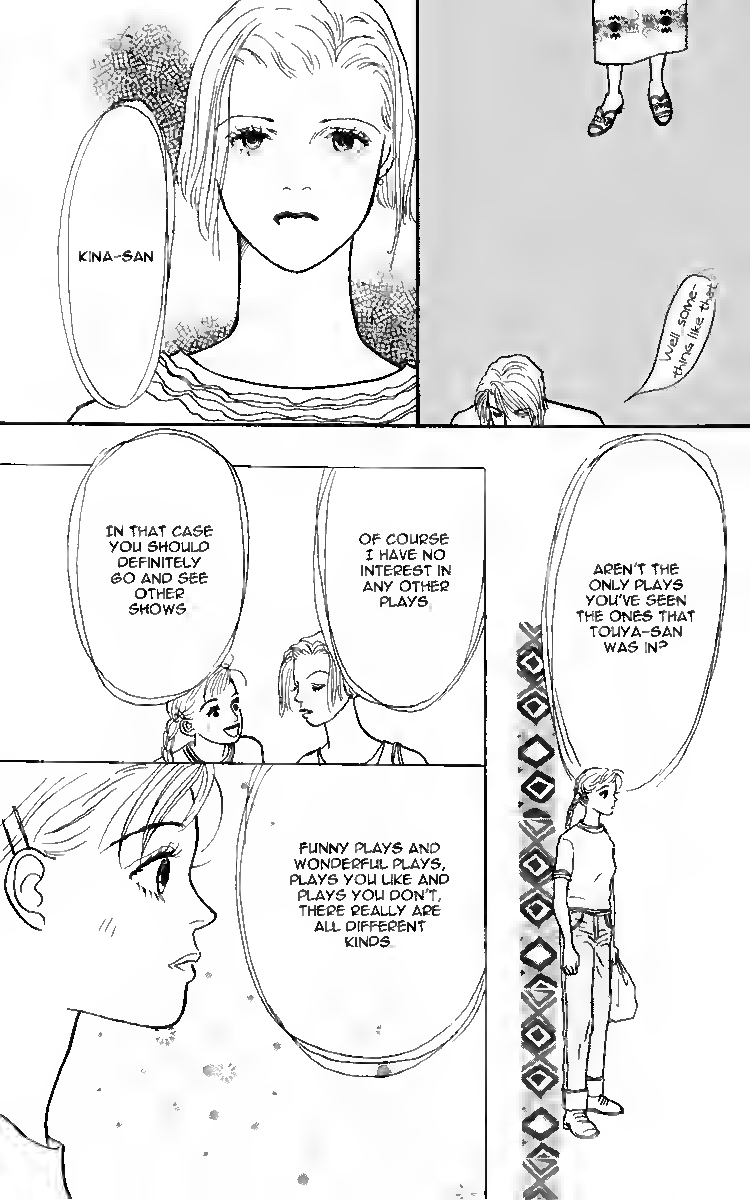

PLEASE GO ON AHEAD. YOU KNOW THE PLACE RIGHT?
HEY, SHE'S CALLING YOU.
KINA-SAAAN
YOU SURE IT'S OKAY... LEAVING A NEWBIE ALONE LIKE THAT?
IT'S FINE. DESPITE HER LOOKS, SHE IS LEVEL HEADED
MORE IMPOR-TANTLY...
You definitely must not lose! Understand!?
LIKE I SAID
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT SHOULD I 'NOT LOSE'?

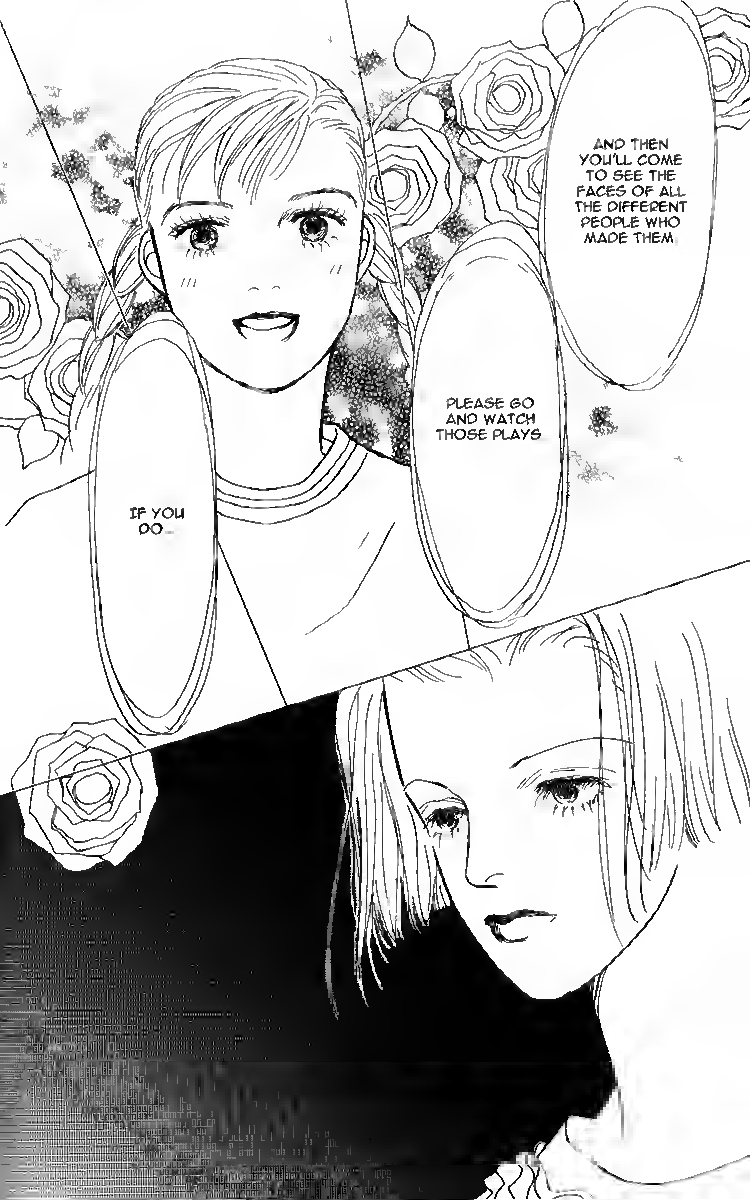

I WILL GIVE A PERFORMANCE THAT WILL MAKE YOU FORGET ALL ABOUT TOUYA-SAN'S
THAT JERK, TALKING BIG...
SAWAMURA FUJINOSUKE! YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST NOT LOSE TO THAT— THAT— STUCK UP BRAT!
Clap
Clap
Clap
WITHOUT THAT LEVEL OF WILL-POWER YOU CAN'T STAND UP ON STAGE

YOU AREN'T ANNOYED!? TOLIYA!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, DO YOU?
NO MATTER WHO IT IS, IF I SEE SOMEONE WHO PERFORMS BETTER THAN I DO, I'LL BE ANNOYED.
BUT
MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT IS THE ME WHO IS CURRENTLY STANDING ON STAGE.

I DON'T HAVE THE LEISURE TO BE COMPARING MYSELF TO OTHERS...
IN THAT INSTANT, WHETHER OR NOT I CAN GIVE A PERFORMANCE THAT I AM SATISFIED WITH—
THAT IS WHAT'S IMPORTANT.
YOU KNOW...
I WENT THROUGH ALL THE EFFORT OF ACTING COOL ? SO DON'T GO SAYING THINGS LIKE THAT.
LIAR!
JUST HONESTLY SAY IT. THE TRUTH IS YOU'RE IRRITATED BY THAT SAWAMURA FUJINOSUKE.
YOU HATE LOSING MORE THAN ANYONE.

Bah
EVEN SO, THE WAY I'M ONLY BOOKING TV GIGS LATELY IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO IRRITATE ME.
YOU LIKE PLAYS THAT MUCH?
WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT THEM?
THAT MOMENT OF STAGE FRIGHT I GUESS.
THE NERVOUSNESS OF NOT BEING ABLE TO REDO THINGS.


KINA-SAN
Well, something like that.
AREN'T THE ONLY PLAYS YOU'VE SEEN THE ONES THAT TOUYA-SAN WAS IN?
OF COURSE I HAVE NO INTEREST IN ANY OTHER PLAYS.
IN THAT CASE YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY GO AND SEE OTHER SHOWS.
FUNNY PLAYS AND WONDERFUL PLAYS, PLAYS YOU LIKE AND PLAYS YOU DON'T. THERE REALLY ARE ALL DIFFERENT KINDS.


AND THEN YOU'LL COME TO SEE THE FACES OF ALL THE DIFFERENT PEOPLE WHO MADE THEM.
PLEASE GO AND WATCH THOSE PLAYS
IF YOU DO...

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I HEARD ABOUT YOUR SECRET TRAINING FROM YUU-SAN!
THAT GIRL ...
I'LL BE COMING TO OBSERVE NEXT TIME
DON'T COME.
WHY NOT? I WON'T INTERFERE.
BECAUSE I SAID SO! YOU CAN'T COME.
Absolutely not!

TOLIYA-SAN...
IT'S THE SAME NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I DO IT...
IT'S USELESS...
AS I AM, IT'S NO GOOD...
YOU SEE IT TOO, DON'T YOU?
AS IT IS, I'M SIMPLY AN OLD MAN...
THE OLD MAN IN THIS TEA HOUSE CANNOT BE HUMAN.

THE FILMING FOR THE DRAMA IS GETTING BUSIER. I WON'T BE ABLE TO COME FOR A WHILE
EVEN THOUGH HE IS MOVING
HE CANNOT SEEM ALIVE.
IT'S GOOD TIMING.
DURING THIS TIME I'LL LET MY HEAD COOL OFF A BIT.
TOUYA-SAN

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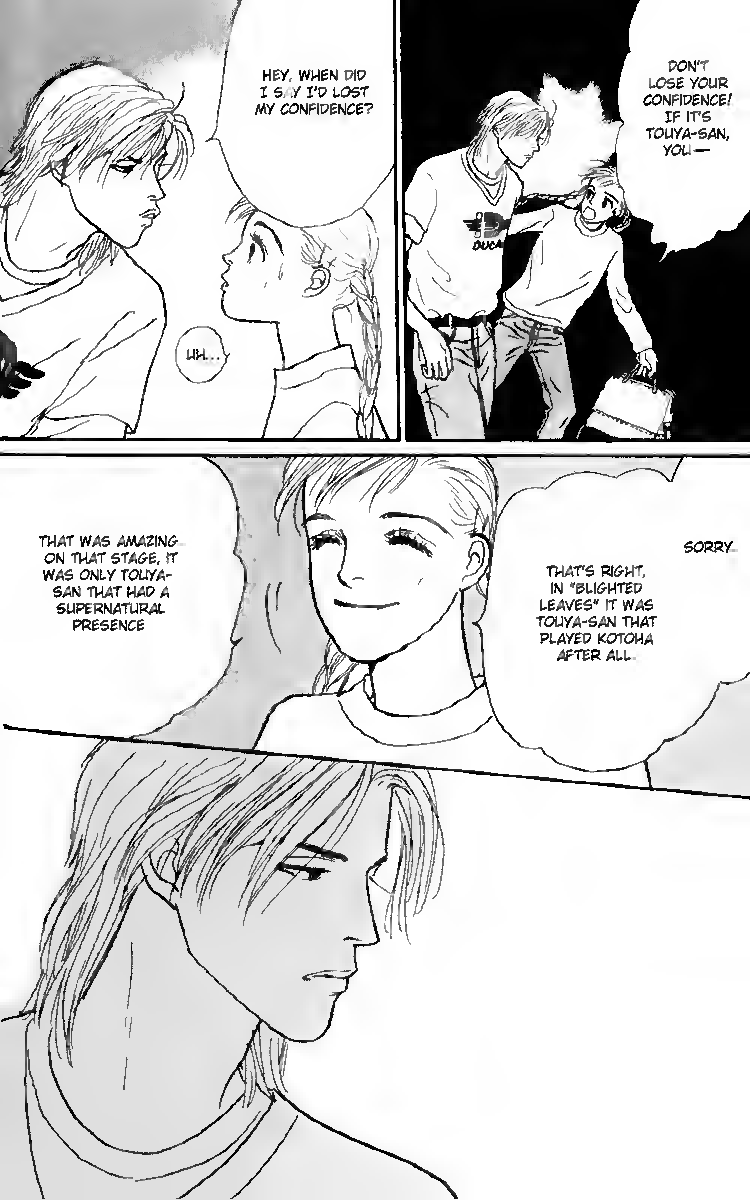
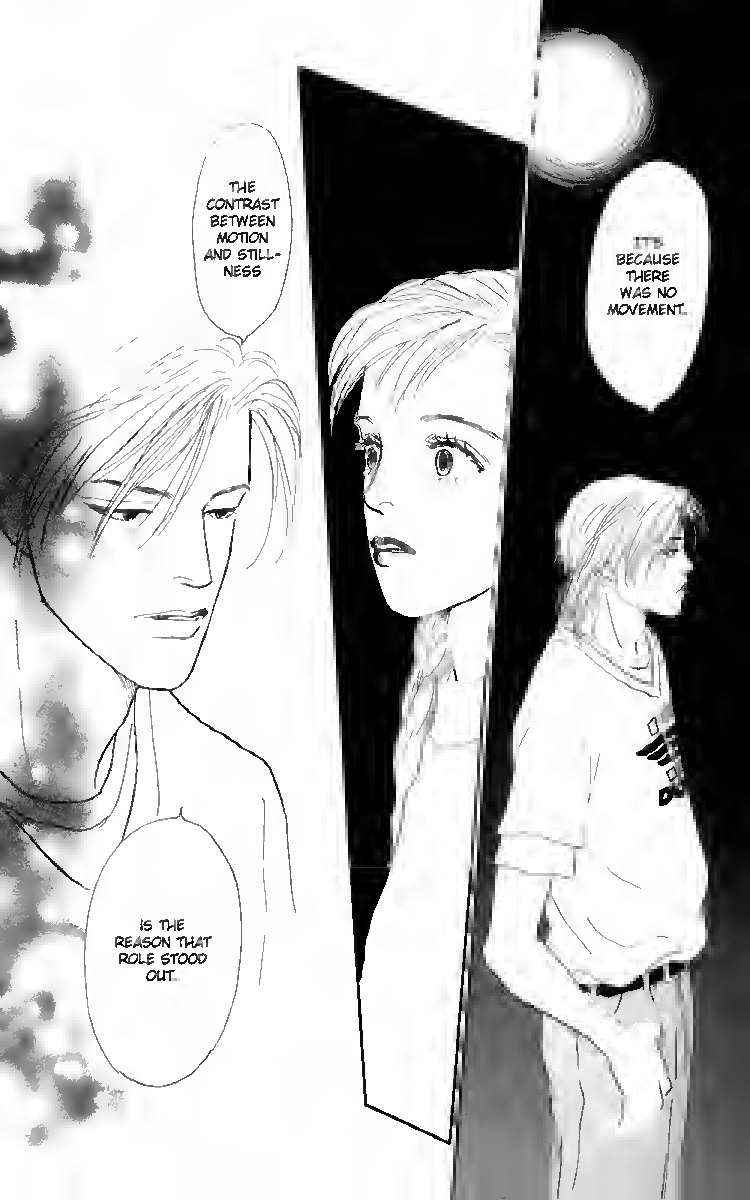

HEY, WHEN DID I SAY I'D LOST MY CONFIDENCE?
UH...
DON'T LOSE YOUR CONFIDENCE! IF IT'S TOUYA-SAN, YOU—
SORRY.
THAT'S RIGHT, IN "BLIGHTED LEAVES" IT WAS TOUYA-SAN THAT PLAYED KOTOHA AFTER ALL.
THAT WAS AMAZING ON THAT STAGE, IT WAS ONLY TOUYA-SAN THAT HAD A SUPERNATURAL PRESENCE


IT'S BECAUSE THERE WAS NO MOVEMENT.
THE CONTRAST BETWEEN MOTION AND STILL-NESS
IS THE REASON THAT ROLE STOOD OUT.

THAT'S HOW IT WAS.
HOWEVER, IN THIS PLAY, THAT TRICK WON'T WORK.
THAT'S HOW IT IS
GRANNY,

THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS IS A MONODRAMA
EVERY THING
RESTS ON THE ACTOR, ICHII TOUYA.
THAT'S THE SORT OF PLAY IT IS
TOUYA-SAN

I HAVE CONFIDENCE
THAT SINCE IT'S YOU, YOU CAN DO IT

IT'S NOT BLIND FAITH!
SEEMS LIKE BLIND FAITH TO ME.
DUCA!
BECAUSE I'M THE ONE SAYING IT AND I'M THE ONE WHO WROTE THIS PLAY
YOU CAN DEFINITELY DO IT.

IS THAT HOW IT IS?
THAT'S REASSURING
YEP.
AND SO,
THAT AUTUMN'S

PERFOR-
MANCE OF
"BLIGHTED
LEAVES"
BEGAN
GRANNY,
ON THAT
STAGE

ON THAT STAGE HAD MORE INTENSE MOVEMENT THAN ANYONE, BUT STILL, NOT A TRACE OF LIFE
SAWAMURA FUJINO-SUKE'S KOTOHA
THE KOTOHA THAT DID NOT BUDGE AN INCH FOR TOUYA.
WAS KOTOHA.
THE ONE MOVING AROUND MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE

UNIT 46

A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PORTRAYAL FROM ICHII TOUYA'S

REVIEWS OF "THE BLIGHTED LEAVES" ARE ALL OVER THE MAGAZINES
LOOK, IT'S HERE TOO!
"KAZUMA RIN'S DIRECTING STYLE IS AS POWERFUL AS ALWAYS, AND ACTOR FUJINOSUKE'S OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE SYNCHRONIZES WITH HIS STAGE PERFECTLY"
SUCH HIGH PRAISES!!

T/N: *Reverse Thinking: Taking a conventional idea and reversing it to create a more interesting scenario.

KING
KAZUMA-SAN IS INDEED A TRUE KING...
King?
A KING? WHEN HE'S DIRECTING, HE DOES NEED TO HAVE AN IMPOSING MANNER IN ORDER TO CONTROL THE STAGE.
BUT IF HE ONLY ACTS LIKE A TYRANT, HE WON'T MAKE IT A GOOD SHOW.
AFTER ALL, ONLY THE ACTORS CAN MAKE REAL THE KINGDOM THE "KING" HAS CREATED!
.....
...KAZUMA-SAN ONCE TOLD ME, "THE ONE TO AWAKEN A NEW FUJINOSUKE WILL BE ME".
THE REASON HIS DRAMAS ARE SO POWERFUL IS PROBABLY BECAUSE OF HIS UNSHAKABLE CONFIDENCE.

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I—
HOW IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?
DIDN'T YOU WRITE THAT PLAY ESPECIALLY FOR TOUYA?
STOP SAYING THAT YOU'VE GOT NO CONFIDENCE

Pants are simple and convenient to wear!

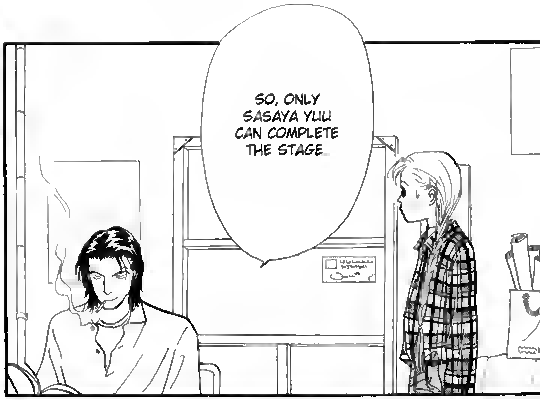
Especially three quarter pants

Right! This is a very important prop in Dragon Quest*!

Besides that, I really can't think of anything else

Phew

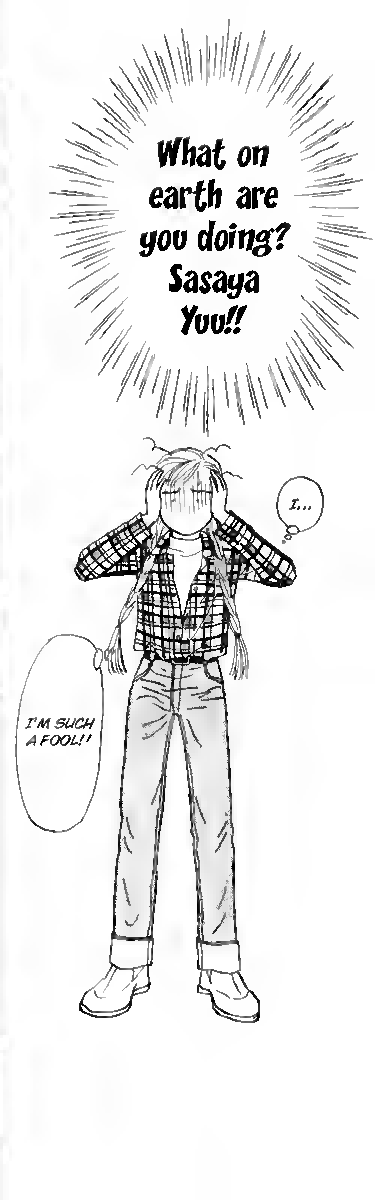
T/N Dragon Quest is an extremely popular video game placing just after Final Fantasy for Square Enix's best selling series



AH.. GRANNY
I'VE ONLY REALIZED IT AT THIS MOMENT.
I... HAVE BEEN RELYING ON TOLYA-SAN THIS WHOLE TIME.
TO BE COMPLACENT OVER THIS PLAY WHICH BELONGS TO JUST THE TWO OF US,
DOING NOTHING, ONLY WATCHING FROM THE SIDELINES...

LEAVING HIM TO EXPLORE AIMLESSLY ON HIS OWN,
YOU CAN DO IT!
I DIDN'T NOTICE HOW MUCH SUFFERING TOUYA WAS GOING THROUGH.
NOT BEING OF ANY HELP AT ALL...
WHAT...

NO.
I REALLY DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO GO WATCH.
I'M A BIT...
ERM, IF THAT'S THE CASE...


What on earth are you doing? Sasaya You!!
I...
I'M SUCH A FOOL!!

I REALLY DON'T TAKE IT TO HEART. TO ME, A STAGE OF THE PAST IS JUST A MEMORY.
AH...
AH! I'M NOT BOTHERED BY IT ONE BIT! ALTHOUGH THE MEDIA HIGHLY PRAISED FUJINOSUKE,
?
IT'S JUST THAT I STILL HAVE SOME REGRETS.
Indeed.
Hahaha
RIGHT, RIGHT!
TO SEE THAT MOVING "KOTOHA"...
NO MATTER WHAT, I SHOULD HAVE GONE TO WATCH IT EARLIER WHEN I HAD THE TIME.
REGRETS?

MAYBE IT COULD HAVE HAD SOME REFERENCE VALUE
Cut!

AH!
SORRY!
BLOOPER!
BLOOPER!
LET'S BREAK FOR TEN MINUTES BEFORE WE DO THE THIRD TAKE!
WHAT'S WITH YOU? YOU'VE BEEN HAVING A LOT OF NG* TAKES LATELY!
IT'S REALLY RARE FOR YOU TO REPEAT A SCENE SO MANY TIMES.
...

*Q/C Note Just in case you don t read Skip Beat enough NG = No Good = a take of a scene that is not good enough for the director

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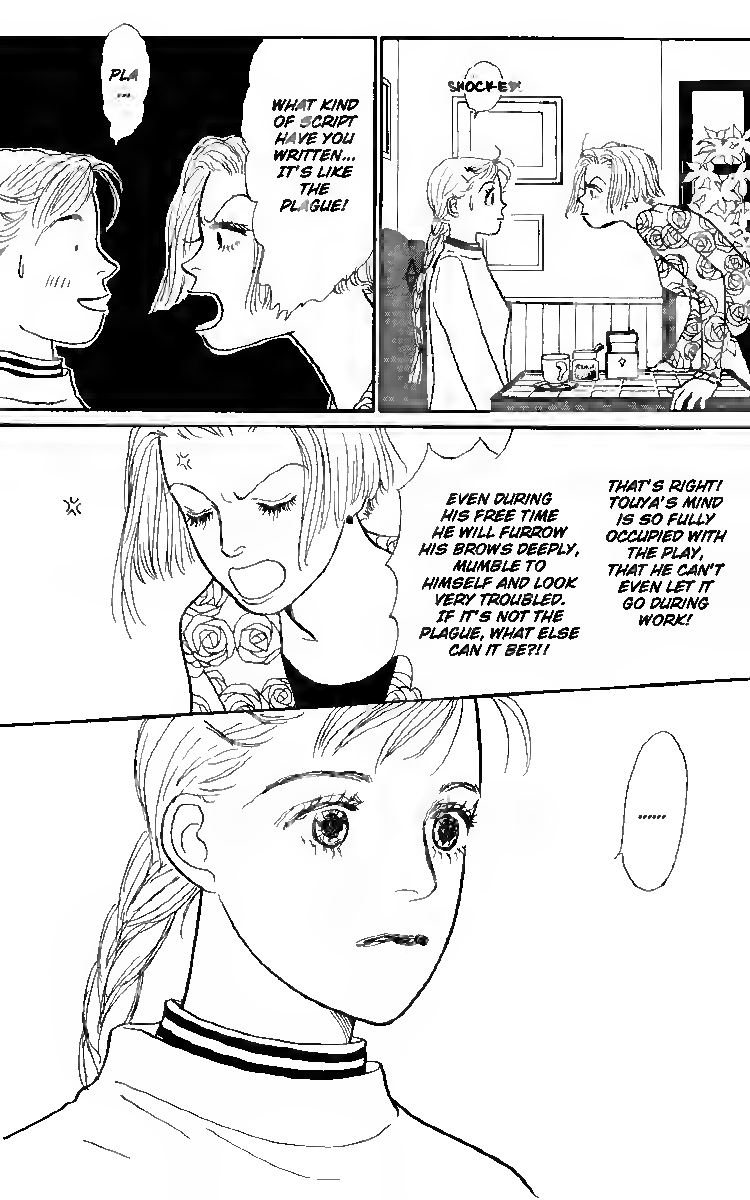
KINA-GAN!
.....
I TOLD YOU!
EH?
THE CURRENT TOUYA IS DIFFERENT FROM HIS USUAL SELF.
HE WOULD REGRET IT IF HE REPLACED ME! I'VE HIT THE MARK!


PLA
WHAT KIND OF SCRIPT HAVE YOU WRITTEN... IT'S LIKE THE PLAGUE!
SHOCKED!
EVEN DURING HIS FREE TIME HE WILL FURROW HIS BROWS DEEPLY, MUMBLE TO HIMSELF AND LOOK VERY TROUBLED. IF IT'S NOT THE PLAGUE, WHAT ELSE CAN IT BE?!!
THAT'S RIGHT! TOLYA'S MIND IS SO FULLY OCCUPIED WITH THE PLAY, THAT HE CAN'T EVEN LET IT GO DURING WORK!
.....

TOUYA-SAN... REALLY IS WORKING VERY HARD...
YES, HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE KIND TO NOT GIVE UP EASILY AND PERSEVERE ON
KINA-SAN!
WHAT ARE YOU SO HAPPY ABOUT?
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T ADMIT DEFEAT EITHER! ALTHOUGH WE'RE STILL TRYING NOW, I BELIEVE THERE'LL BE A BREAKTHROUGH!
LOOK AT THESE, THESE ARE THE MATERIALS THAT I'VE COLLECTED
Surprised?
It's really a lot!
I SAY...

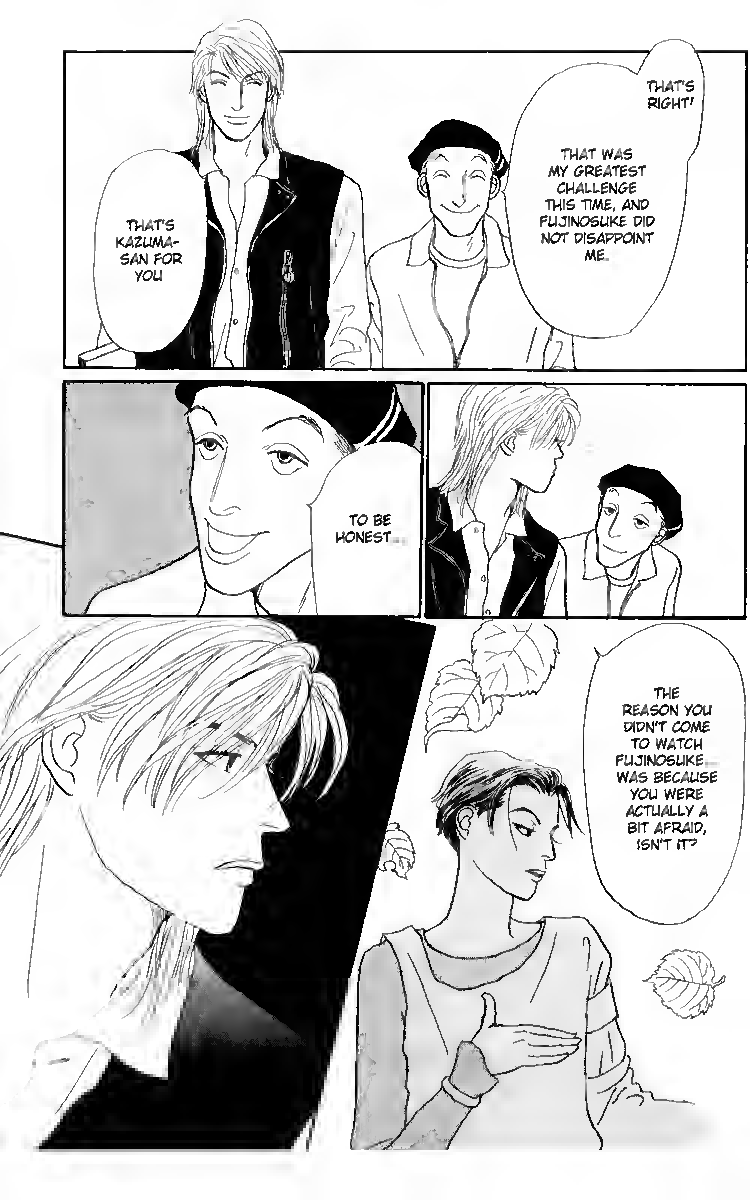
WELL THEN, I'LL HAVE TO START SOON!
I'LL STUDY THESE MATERIALS REALLY HARD! KINA-SAN, IF YOU SEE TOUYA-SAN, PLEASE TELL HIM THAT I'M WORKING HARD TO BECOME A COMPETENT DIRECTOR!
I'LL HAVE TO CHANGE THE WAY WE REHEARSE FROM NOW ON.
ALL RIGHT.
I'M OFF!

HEY...
WAIT...
WERE YOU REALLY...
I WAS SAYING?
LISTENING TO WHAT.
HEY!
SASAYA YUU!!

GRANNY,
I WON'T ADMIT DEFEAT,
I WON'T STOP MOVING FORWARD
BECAUSE THOSE WHO HAVE CREATED SUCH A MAG-NIFICENT STAGE
HAVE ALREADY IGNITED THE FLAMES WITHIN MY HEART.

THEY INSPIRE ME TO KEEP ON PROGRESSING,
The Age-changing Mountain Pass
MAKING ME UNABLE TO WAIT TO SEE THE WORLD WHICH IS STILL BEING NURTURED NOW, AND BREAK FREE OF ITS COCOON...
AH— I WISH WE COULD PULL BACK THE CURTAINS SOON!

HEY!
TOLY-KUN
I'VE JUST FINISHED RECORDING THE SPECIAL FOR "THE BLIGHTED LEAVES"
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF THEY HAD BROADCASTED THIS WHEN THE PLAY HAD JUST STARTED IT'S RUN, BUT DOING A SPECIAL NOW WHEN THE RUN HAS ENDED IS USELESS
ISN'T THIS GOOD? THIS SHOWS THAT "THE BLIGHTED LEAVES" IS STILL BEING TALKED ABOUT!
AND THE MOST PRAISE GOES TO THE ONE WHOSE CHARACTER IS TOTALLY OPPOSITE OF MINE, RIGHT?


THAT'S KAZUMA-SAN FOR YOU
THAT'S RIGHT!
THAT WAS MY GREATEST CHALLENGE THIS TIME, AND FUJINOSUKE DID NOT DISAPPOINT ME.
TO BE HONEST...
THE REASON YOU DIDN'T COME TO WATCH FUJINOSUKE... WAS BECAUSE YOU WERE ACTUALLY A BIT AFRAID, ISN'T IT?

AFRAID...?
I HEARD FROM HIM THAT SASAYA YUU WROTE A NEW PLAY, AND HE REALLY WANTS THE ROLE.
IT'S A PITY THAT SASAYA INSISTS THAT SHE WROTE IT FOR YOU.

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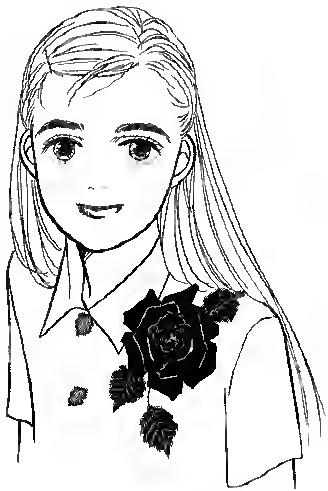
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF PLAY IT IS... I REALLY WANT TO SEE IT.
WANT TO TAKE A LOOK?

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, WANT TO GIVE IT A TRY?
WHAT?
KAZUMA RIN AND SAWAMURA FUJINOSUKE...

SASAYA YUU AND ICHII TOUYA..
TWO DIFFERENT TEAMS WORKING ON THE SAME SCRIPT,
CREATING THEIR OWN "THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS"
HOW ABOUT IT? ARE YOU INTERESTED?



LET'S DO TWO VERSIONS
OF "THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS".

明日の王様
ASHITA NO OUSAMA
UNIT 47

AT THAT TIME
GRANNY
I WAS COMPLETELY UNAWARE
OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED

HUH?
EVEN IF IT'S LARGE THE SEAT CAPACITY ISN'T THAT GREAT
ALSO I DID A LITTLE LOOKING AROUND, AND SEVERAL COMPANIES HAVE ALREADY PUT THEIR NAMES FORWARD AS SPONSORS
SHELL THEATRE? THAT LARGE A THEATRE?

IT'S NOTHING TO BE SURPRISED ABOUT.
AFTER ALL, IT'S THE WORK OF THE MUCH WATCHED PLAYWRIGHT SASAYA YUU AND ACTOR ICHII TOUYA.
IF YOU WANTED TO, YOU COULD PROBABLY GET A MUCH LARGER VENUE.
Hah
hah
Uhh
BUT
I'D
PREFER A SMALLER PLACE — SOMETHING...
Something...
Shaking
head
DON'T UNDERESTIMATE TOUYA'S POPULARITY IF YOU'RE HALF HEARTED ABOUT THIS, THE FANS WON'T ACCEPT IT. IF YOU PLAN ON CHARGING MONEY TO SEE YOUR PLAY, YOU'VE GOT TO ACT LIKE A PROFESSIONAL AND UNDERSTAND THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

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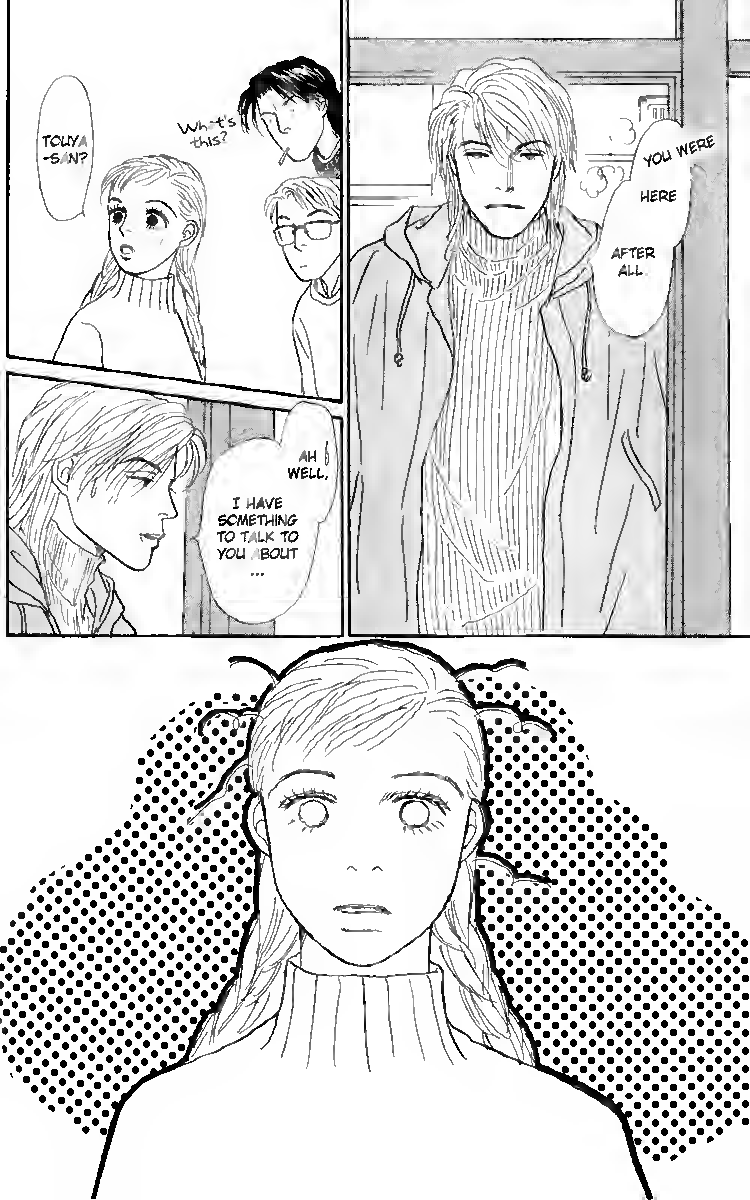
PROFESSIONAL ..


TOUYA -SAN?
Wh-t's this?
YOU WERE HERE AFTER ALL.
AH WELL. I HAVE SOMETHING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT ...

EH ...!?
EH...
EH...
Cough
KAZUMA-SAN AND FUJINOSUKE-SAN!?
THE TWO OF THEM ARE DOING "THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS"!?
INTERESTING I'M IN!!

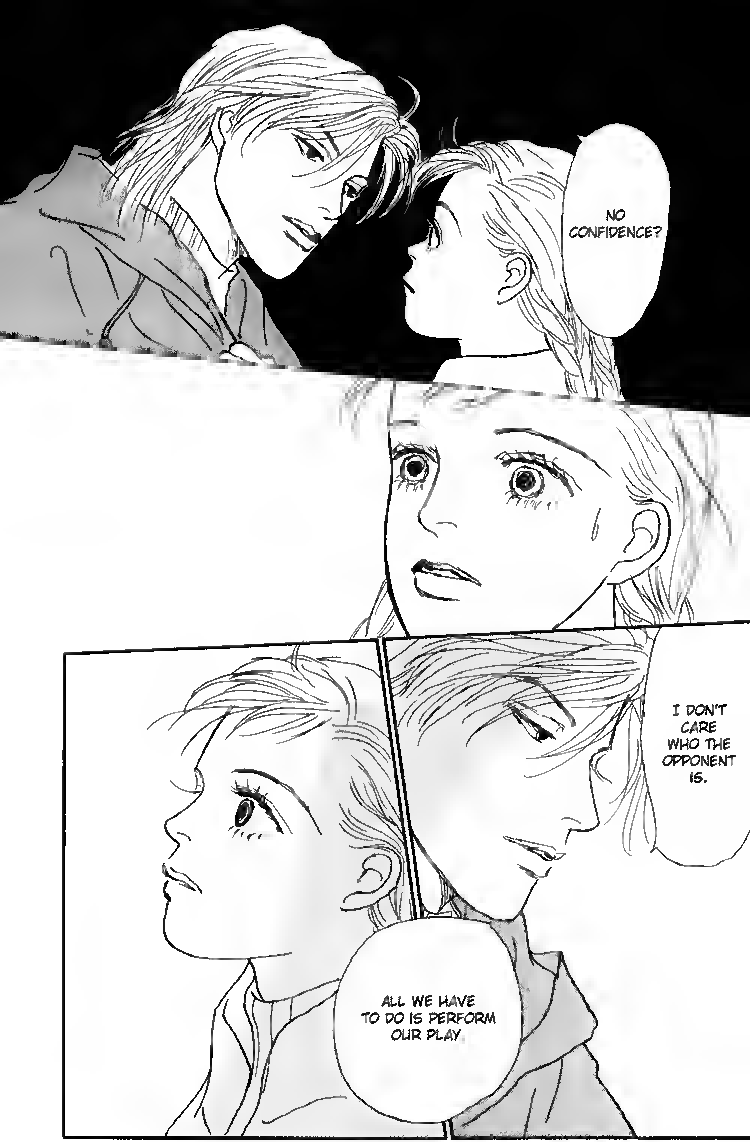
nod
nod
BUT
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT SAWAMURA FUJINOSUKE. HE'S NOT LIKELY TO AGREE SO EASILY...
YEAH, THAT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING HE'D SAY.
THE TWO OF THEM MET TODAY.
HE SAID HE WAS FREE IN MAY
SEEMS LIKE HE'S INTERESTED TOO.
!
hah
hah
haa

T...TOUYA-SAN
WOW
BRAINS AND BEAUTY. IF THEY DECIDE TO DO THIS, IT'S GOING TO BE A BIG DEAL.
THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PLAY AND THE PRESS CONFERENCE.. THE MASS MEDIA IS GOING TO GET BUSY AGAIN.

WHY DID YOU DO THAT...
IT COULDN'T BE HELPED IT JUST HAPPENED.
"JUST HAPPENED"!?
THIS IS SOMETHING THAT "JUST HAPPENED"!?
NOT TO MENTION WE HAVEN'T EVEN BEEN REHEARSING LATELY!
THAT'S RIGHT
EVEN NOW, I AM INCAPABLE OF PLAYING THAT ROLE
IT'S NO DIFFERENT FROM WHEN WE STARTED.
NO, IT'S PROBABLY EVEN WORSE I GUESS.

I THOUGHT NO MATTER WHAT PROBLEMS CAME UP, WE COULD OVERCOME THEM.
TO ME... "THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" IS A SPECIAL PLAY FOR THE TWO OF US TO DO... SO...
IF YOU KNOW THAT, THEN WHY...
I...
BECAUSE IT WAS A PLAY FOR JUST THE TWO OF US!

SORRY
FOR ACTING SO WHIMSICALLY.
OTHER THAN APOLOGIZE, WHAT DO YOU PLAN ON DOING? WE AREN'T EVEN AT THE STARTING LINE AND IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING...
HA HA HA
THAT'S TOUGH ISN'T IT?
THIS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER, TOUYA-SAN!
IT'S KAZUMA RIN AND SAWAMURA FUJINOSUKE!!
IT'S THOSE TWO!!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO!?


NO CONFIDENCE?
I DON'T CARE WHO THE OPPONENT IS.
ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS PERFORM OUR PLAY.

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY, "THE STRONGER THE RIVAL, THE STRONGER THE FIGHTING SPIRIT."
I THINK YOU'RE THE SAME WAY, TOO
IT'S THOSE KINDS OF CIRCUM-STANCES THAT GET ME FIRED UP
I AM...
SOMEHOW TERRIFIED

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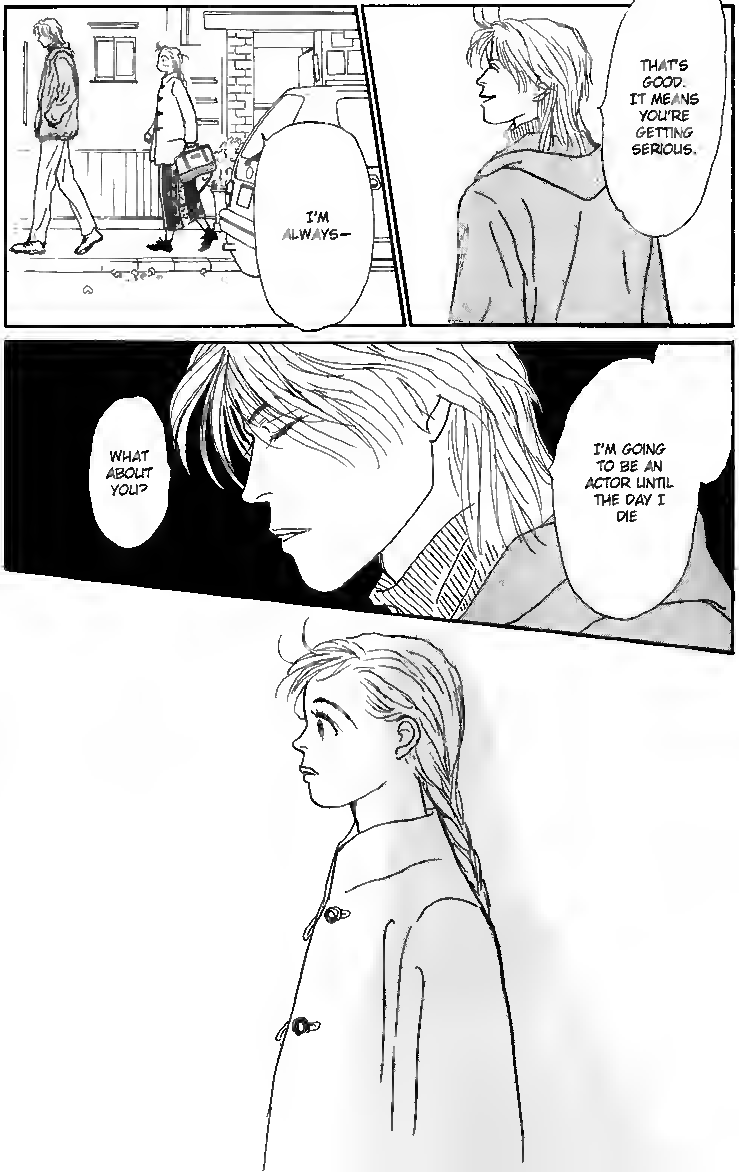
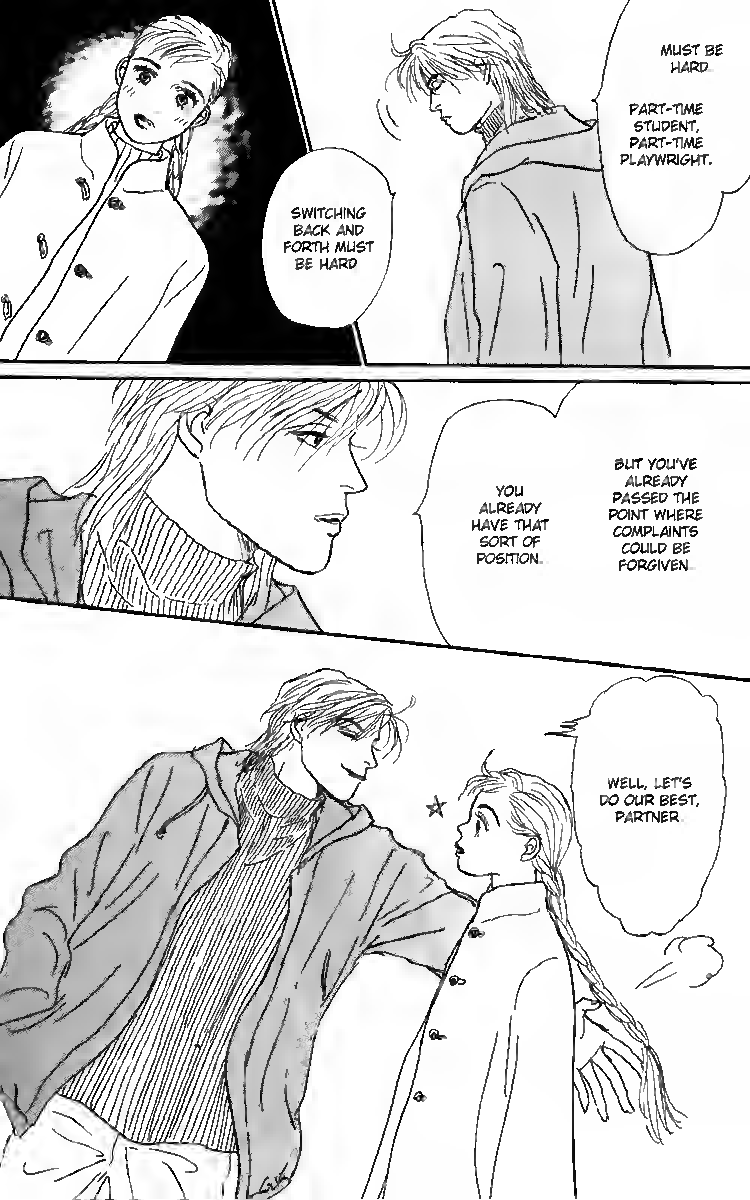

I'M ALWAYS—
THAT'S GOOD. IT MEANS YOU'RE GETTING SERIOUS.
I'M GOING TO BE AN ACTOR UNTIL THE DAY I DIE
WHAT ABOUT YOU?


SWITCHING BACK AND FORTH MUST BE HARD
MUST BE HARD
PART-TIME STUDENT, PART-TIME PLAYWRIGHT.
YOU ALREADY HAVE THAT SORT OF POSITION.
BUT YOU'VE ALREADY PASSED THE POINT WHERE COMPLAINTS COULD BE FORGIVEN.
WELL, LET'S DO OUR BEST, PARTNER.

"LIKE A PROFESSIONAL."
MUST BE HARD. PART-TIME STUDENT, PART—
GRANNY,
I
HAVE FROZEN IN PLACE.

I THOUGHT I WAS WORKING SERIOUSLY UP UNTIL NOW,
BUT MAYBE I WAS STILL RELYING ON THE PROS AROUND ME
I'M STILL AN AMATEUR—
I'M STILL BUSY STUDYING—
I GET THE FEELING I ALWAYS HAD AN ESCAPE PLAN READY IN THE BACK OF MY MIND

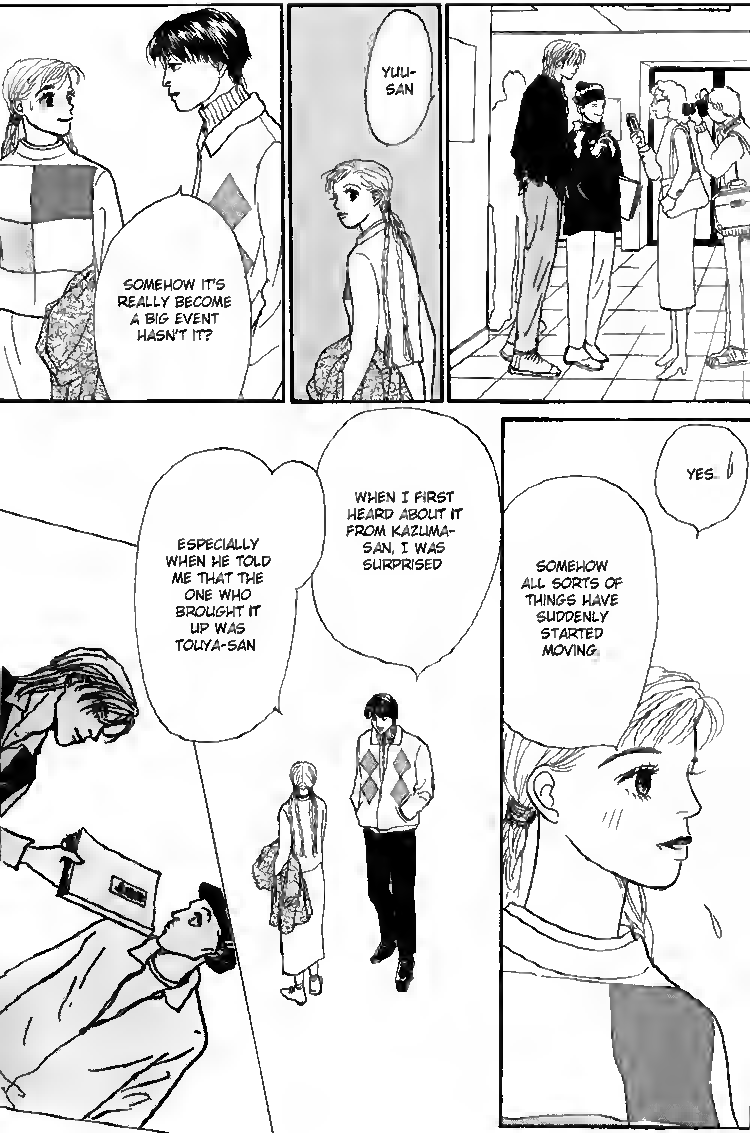
I
HAVE FROZEN IN PLACE
I CAN'T AGREE TO IT.

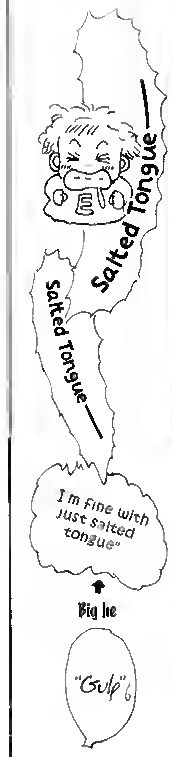
BUT GRANDFATHER, WEREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO TRY CHALLENGING MANY DIFFERENT THINGS?
I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO INTENTION OF NEGLECTING IT.
GRANDFATHER, KABUKI IS MY TRUE STAGE.
QUITE THE OPPOSITE, I FEEL THAT THESE EXPERIENCES ARE MOST BENEFICIAL TO ME.
OVERDOING IT IS A PROBLEM TOO IN THIS CASE AREN'T YOU RUSHING IT A BIT?
TELEVISION, THAT STAGE PERFORMANCE RECENTLY — AND NEXT IS

THE OTHER DAY I WAS TOLD BY THE SEVENTH GENERATION MATSUKAWA
"RECENTLY FU-CHAN'S DEDICATION HAS REALLY BEEN SHOWING."
"I CAN REALLY FEEL HIS AMBITION AS A PERFORMER. IT'S BECOME SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TOO, HUH?"
HE SAID THAT...
I CAN'T REALLY APPROVE OF IT, BUT I'M ALSO LOOKING FORWARD TO THOSE BENEFITS

DO YOUR BEST
I WILL

"The Age-Changing Mountain Pass"
Simultaneous Performance Announcement.


SOMEHOW IT'S REALLY BECOME A BIG EVENT HASN'T IT?
YUU-SAN
YES..
SOMEHOW ALL SORTS OF THINGS HAVE SUDDENLY STARTED MOVING.
WHEN I FIRST HEARD ABOUT IT FROM KAZUMA-SAN, I WAS SURPRISED
ESPECIALLY WHEN HE TOLD ME THAT THE ONE WHO BROUGHT IT UP WAS TOUYA-SAN



HE REALLY HAS A LOT OF CONFIDENCE.
AND
IN THE END WHEN HE SAID HE WANTED ME TO ALSO PERFORM IN THIS PLAY, I COULDN'T WIN AGAINST THE TEMPTATION.
YUU-SAN,
IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS PLAY FANTASTIC, I WILL GIVE IT EVERYTHING I'VE GOT.

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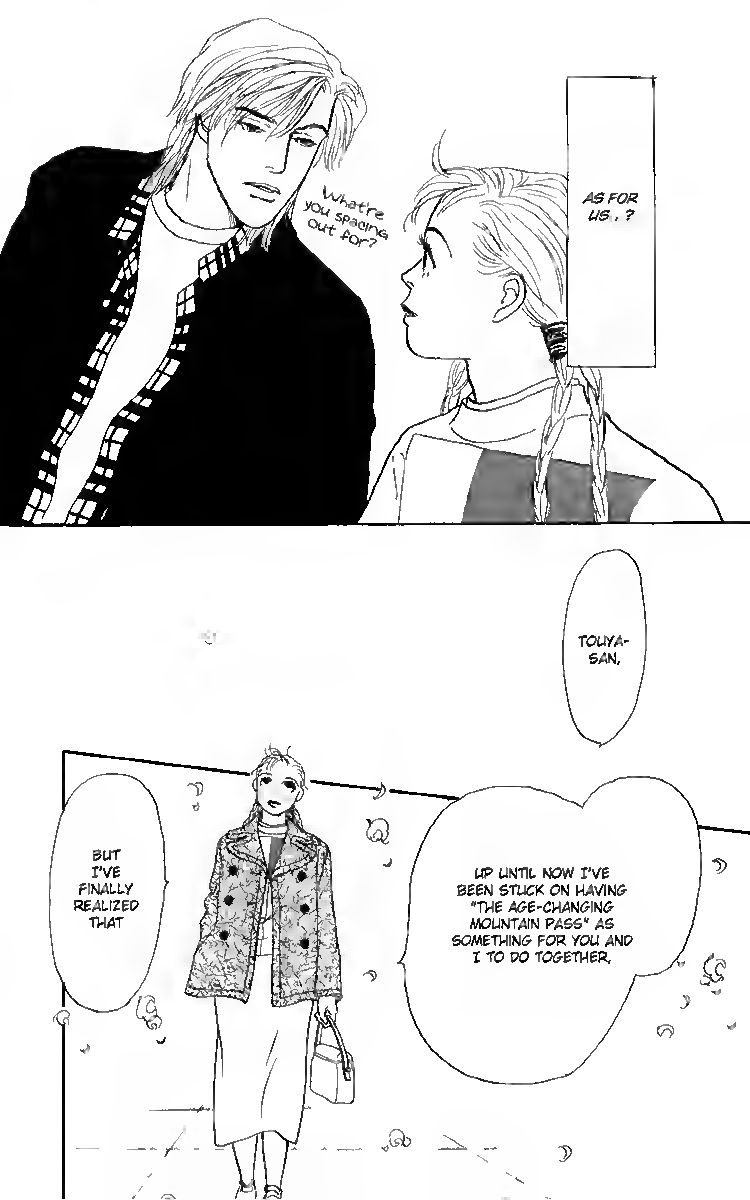
GRANNY
BUT TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I REALLY WANTED TO PAIR UP WITH YOU TO DO THIS PLAY
THINKING ABOUT WHAT KIND OF PERFORMANCE THOSE TWO WILL MAKE OF "THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS"
MAKES ME A LITTLE
EXCITED
AND
HEY!
Grab


What're you spacing out for?
AS FOR US, ?
TOUYA-SAN,
UP UNTIL NOW I'VE BEEN STUCK ON HAVING "THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" AS SOMETHING FOR YOU AND I TO DO TOGETHER.
BUT I'VE FINALLY REALIZED THAT

ENJOY?
WE'LL BE ABLE TO ENJOY ANOTHER COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERFORMANCE, WON'T WE?
IF THE ACTOR AND DIRECTOR ARE DIFFERENT, THE OF COURSE THE PERFORMANCE WILL BE CHANGED TOO.
EVEN THOUGH WE'RE USING THE SAME SCRIPT, THERE WILL BE TWO COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERFORMANCES

ISN'T THAT AMAZING!?
IF I WAS PART OF THE AUDIENCE, I WOULD DEFINITELY WATCH BOTH PERFORMANCES!
IF YOU DIDN'T, WOULDN'T IT BE A WASTE!?
I CAN'T HELP BUT LOOK FORWARD TO IT!!
IT'S A CHANCE! IN THAT PLAY YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE TO WHAT EXTENT THE CREATOR'S PERSONALITY AND STRENGTHS COME OUT.
TOTALLY ABSORBED IN THE AUDIENCE'S PERSPECTIVE, AREN'T YOU?
WELL, SORRY SORRY TO BE A KILLJOY, BUT WE'RE THE ONES BEING SIZED-UP, YOU KNOW

I KNOW
YES,
PRESSURE, HUH?
TOUYA-SAN MIGHT BE USED TO IT, BUT FOR ME THESE PAST FEW DAYS HAVE BEEN REALLY HECTIC
BUT THIS EXCITEMENT BECOMES MY STRENGTH TO HANDLE THE PRESSURE

Important theatre people.
Important sponsors.
EH??
HOW DID YOU KNOW?
I'M THE SAME WAY
HAHAHA, YOU JUST WANT TO ESCAPE FROM IT!
AND BUILDS
THE PRESSURE BUILDS

I'M STILL HUMAN YOU KNOW.
TOLIYA-SAN TOO?
RELIEVED
A LITTLE
IT'S GOOD TO HAVE SCARY THINGS NOW AND THEN
DOING THIS SORT OF JOB, THAT DANGER IS ALWAYS PRESENT.
THAT WAY YOU CAN AVOID LOSING YOURSELF.

YOU GET A LITTLE POPULAR AND EVERYONE AROUND YOU STARTS SPOILING YOU.
NO MATTER WHO IT IS, EVERYONE LIKES TO BE PRAISED.
BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU DON'T FEAR ANYTHING AND START THINKING YOU CAN DO ANYTHING.
THIS STAGE IS A NEW CHALLENGE,
FULL OF BOTH PRESSURE AND FEAR
LET'S DO OUR BEST.

YES!
click
run
AH!
!
Grab
AHH—

B-
BUT
LET
HIM
GO
FROM
HERE ON IN,
THE TIME
WE SPEND
TOGETHER WILL
INCREASE.
WORRYING
ABOUT EACH
AND EVERY
ONE OF THEM
ISN'T GOING
TO HELP.

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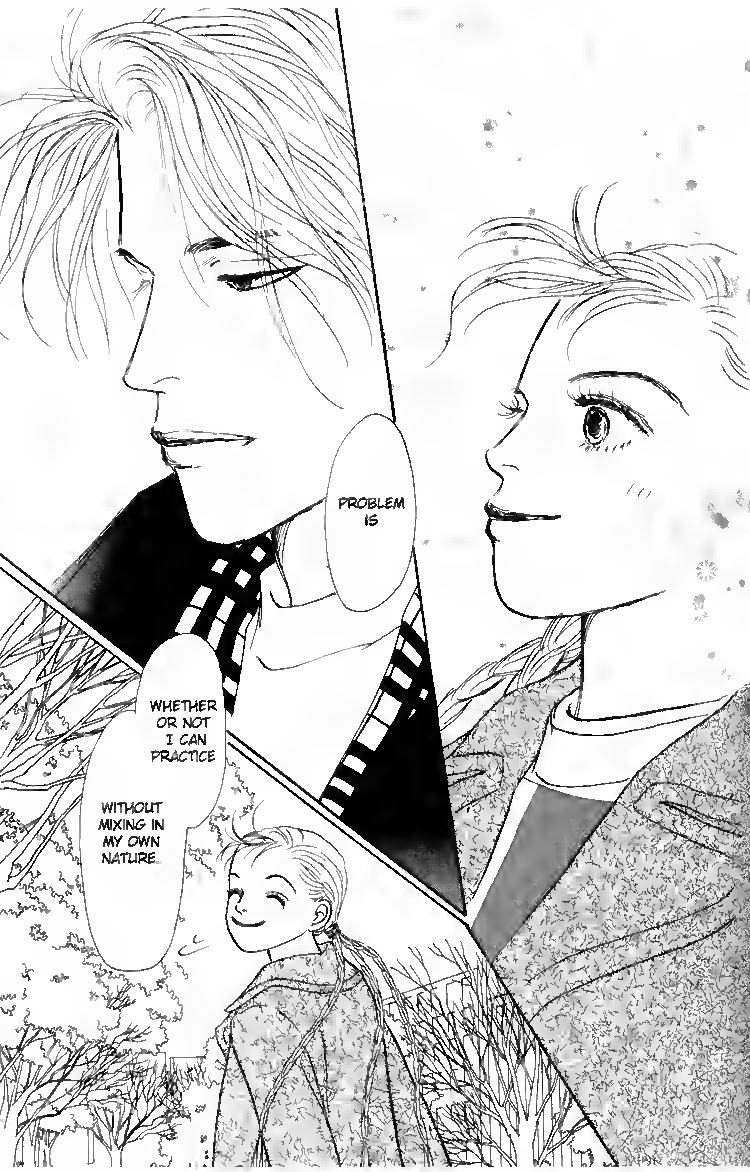

PROBLEM IS
WHETHER OR NOT I CAN PRACTICE
WITHOUT MIXING IN MY OWN NATURE

HM?
WHAT DID YOU SAY, TOUYA-SAN?
Just now
.....
TOUYA-SAN?
IT'S NOTHING

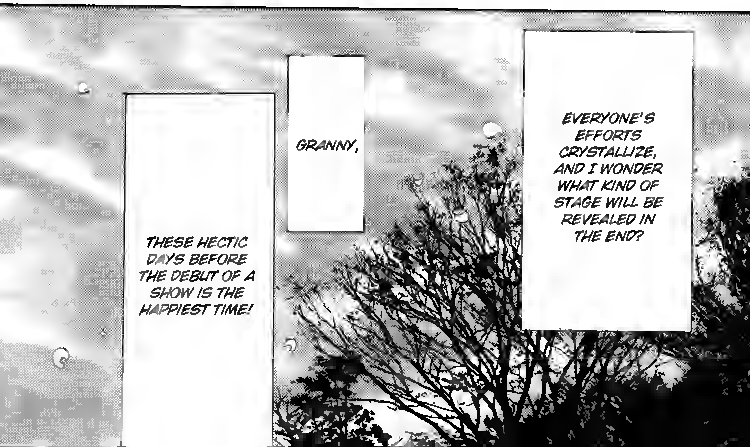
ASHITA NO OUSAMA
明日の王様

UNIT 48

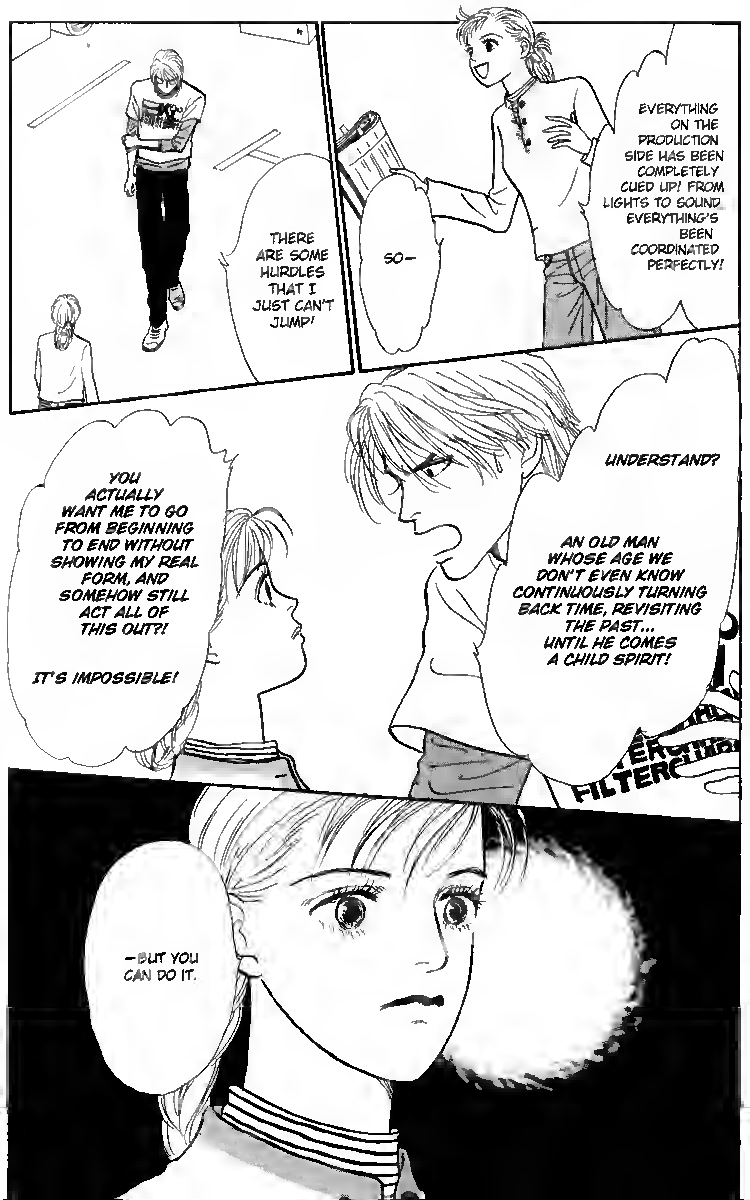
Weekly
ENTERTAINMENT SPECIAL
300yen
SURPRISE ATTACK!!
SPECIAL YEAR END REPORT
Super secret relationship
A mysterious scenario
"Ichii Touya" and the legendary director — "Sasaya Yuu" during a late night meeting!
As expected — ♪ TH-THEY PUBLISHED IT
EVEN THOUGH PEOPLE SAY THAT...
"THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" IS OUR STAGE ALONE,
IN REALITY, THE STRENGTH OF JUST TWO PEOPLE ISN'T ENOUGH TO HOLD UP AN ENTIRE PRODUCTION.
SOUND EFFECTS

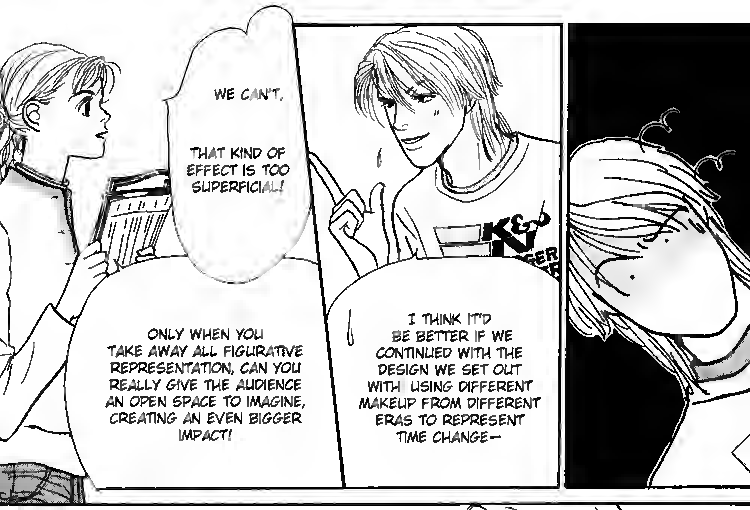
COUNTLESS IDEAS COME FROM THE COLLECTIVE BRAINSTORMS OF CAST AND CREW,

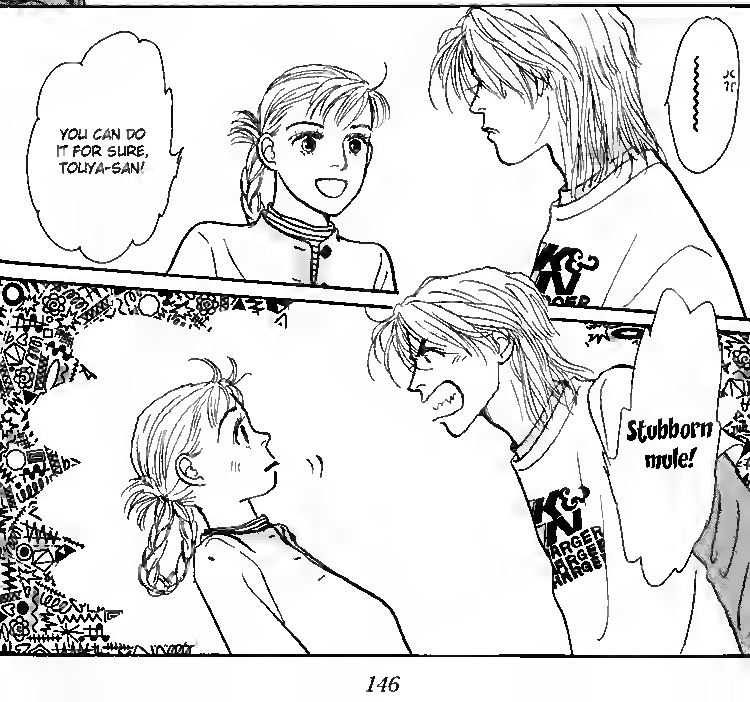
SLOWLY, DOTS CONNECT INTO LINES AND LINES FORM SHAPES—

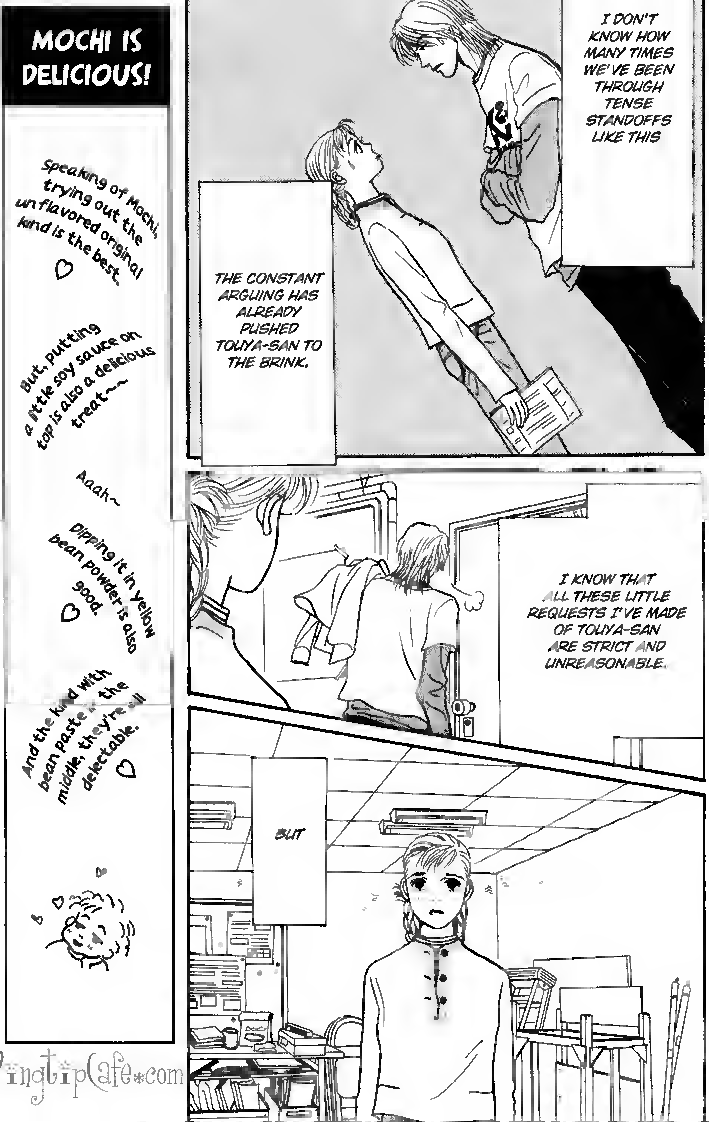

GRANNY,
THESE HECTIC DAYS BEFORE THE DEBUT OF A SHOW IS THE HAPPIEST TIME!
EVERYONE'S EFFORTS CRYSTALLIZE, AND I WONDER WHAT KIND OF STAGE WILL BE REVEALED IN THE END?

.....
YOU...
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ASKING OF ME?


THERE ARE SOME HURDLES THAT I JUST CAN'T JUMP!
SO—
EVERYTHING ON THE PRODUCTION SIDE HAS BEEN COMPLETELY CUED UP! FROM LIGHTS TO SOUND EVERYTHING'S BEEN COORDINATED PERFECTLY!
YOU! ACTUALLY WANT ME TO GO FROM BEGINNING TO END WITHOUT SHOWING MY REAL FORM, AND SOMEHOW STILL ACT ALL OF THIS OUT?!
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
AN OLD MAN WHOSE AGE WE DON'T EVEN KNOW CONTINUOUSLY TURNING BACK TIME, REVISITING THE PAST... UNTIL HE COMES A CHILD SPIRIT!
UNDERSTAND?
—BUT YOU CAN DO IT.


WE CAN'T.
THAT KIND OF EFFECT IS TOO SUPERFICIAL!
ONLY WHEN YOU TAKE AWAY ALL FIGURATIVE REPRESENTATION, CAN YOU REALLY GIVE THE AUDIENCE AN OPEN SPACE TO IMAGINE, CREATING AN EVEN BIGGER IMPACT!
I THINK IT'D BE BETTER IF WE CONTINUED WITH THE DESIGN WE SET OUT WITH USING DIFFERENT MAKEUP FROM DIFFERENT ERAS TO REPRESENT TIME CHANGE—


YOU CAN DO IT FOR SURE, TOUYA-SAN!
Stubborn mule!


MOCHI IS DELICIOUS!
Speaking of Mochi, trying out the unflavored original kind is the best.
But, putting a little soy sauce on top is also a delicious treat~~
Aaah~
Dipping it in yellow bean powder is also good.
And the kind with bean paste in the middle, they're all delectable.
I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES WE'VE BEEN THROUGH TENSE STANDOFFS LIKE THIS
THE CONSTANT ARGUING HAS ALREADY PUSHED TOUYA-SAN TO THE BRINK.
I KNOW THAT ALL THESE LITTLE REQUESTS I'VE MADE OF TOUYA-SAN ARE STRICT AND UNREASONABLE.
BUT
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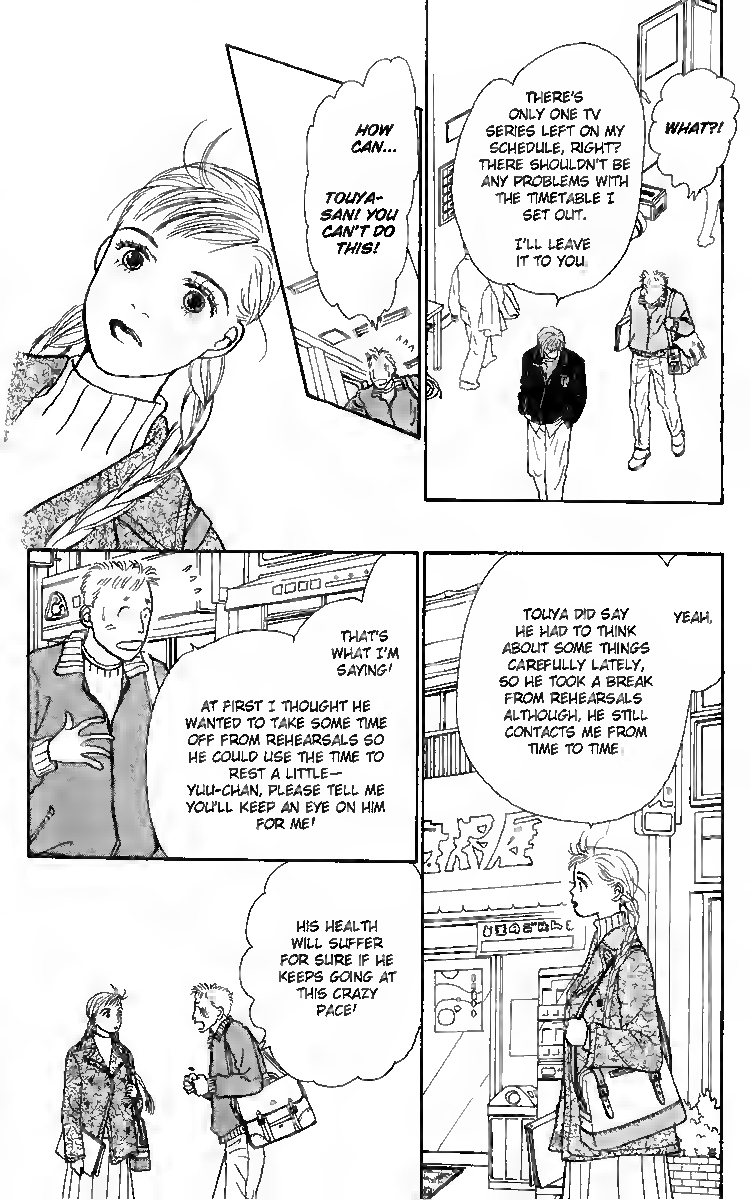
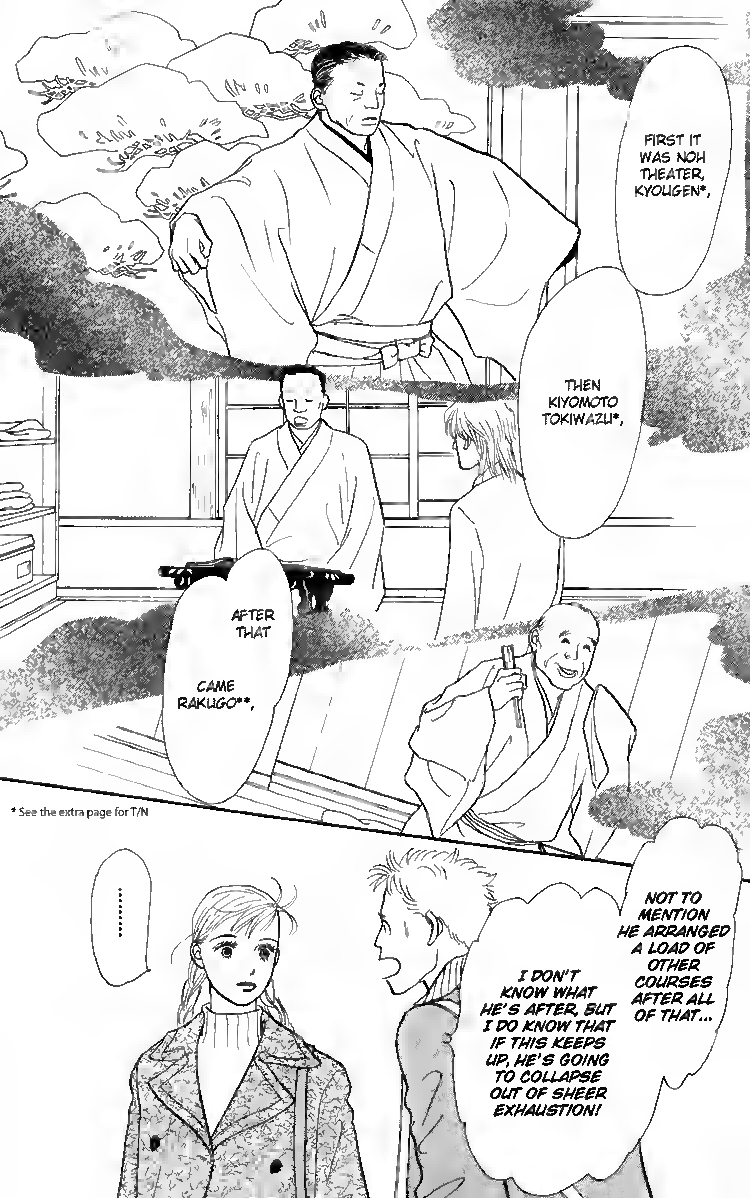
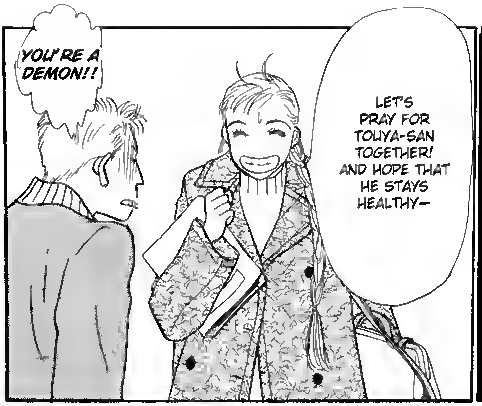
ON THIS STAGE,
I WANT TO FORGE AN UNPARALLELED "ICHII TOUYA"
The Age-Changing Mountain Pass
NO MATTER WHAT,
I STILL HOPE TO REALIZE MY DREAM...
ALL THAT I CAN DO NOW IS...
Uuh...
CAN'T BE...
JUST TO WAIT IT OUT?
IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I CAN USE FOR REFERENCE?
I—
IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN HELP HIM WITH?
EH?
OH, I THINK I SAW HIM TALKING WITH SOME TECHIES IN SOUND STAGE 8.

HAHAHA. NO WONDER HE'S RUN DOWN.
OR IS IT SOMETHING ELSE, LIKE .. WORKING HARD UNDER THIS LEGENDARY DIRECTOR OF HIS?
HE'S GOT THIS WORKED-TO-THE-BONE LOOK ON HIS FACE RECENTLY, HAS WORK BEEN THAT STRESSFUL?
GO EASY ON HIM!
TOUYA-SAN!
HUH?
PLEASE DON'T NAP BACKSTAGE! I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU! LET'S GO! THE CAR'S ALREADY WAITING!
Quickly! Quickly!


THERE'S ONLY ONE TV SERIES LEFT ON MY SCHEDULE, RIGHT? THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE TIMETABLE I SET OUT.
I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU.
WHAT?!
HOW CAN...
TOUYA-SAN! YOU CAN'T DO THIS!
YEAH,
TOUYA DID SAY HE HAD TO THINK ABOUT SOME THINGS CAREFULLY LATELY, SO HE TOOK A BREAK FROM REHEARSALS ALTHOUGH, HE STILL CONTACTS ME FROM TIME TO TIME.
THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYING!
AT FIRST I THOUGHT HE WANTED TO TAKE SOME TIME OFF FROM REHEARSALS SO HE COULD USE THE TIME TO REST A LITTLE— YUU-CHAN, PLEASE TELL ME YOU'LL KEEP AN EYE ON HIM FOR ME!
HIS HEALTH WILL SUFFER FOR SURE IF HE KEEPS GOING AT THIS CRAZY PACE!


FIRST IT WAS NOH THEATER, KYOUGEN*,
THEN KIYOMOTO TOKIWAZU*,
AFTER THAT
CAME RAKUGO**,
* See the extra page for T/N
.....
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'S AFTER, BUT I DO KNOW THAT IF THIS KEEPS UP, HE'S GOING TO COLLAPSE OUT OF SHEER EXHAUSTION!
NOT TO MENTION HE ARRANGED A LOAD OF OTHER COURSES AFTER ALL OF THAT...

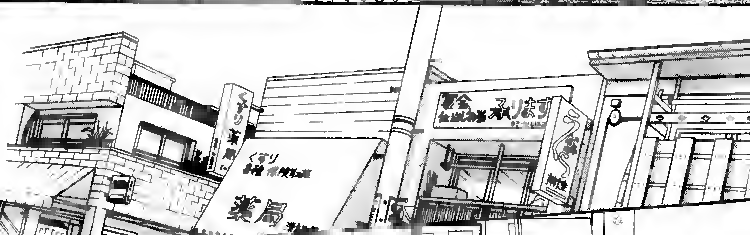
TO SIMPLIFY MOVEMENTS TO THEIR MOST BASIC FORM,
THE SUBTLE CHANGES IN TONE,
AND THE SKILL WITH WHICH A PERSON ACTS THEIR PART—
SO,
I'M HOPING THAT YOU CAN...
LET'S PRAY TOGETHER!


YOU'RE A DEMON!!
LET'S PRAY FOR TOUYA-SAN TOGETHER! AND HOPE THAT HE STAYS HEALTHY—
EH?

GRANNY,
A PERSON SOMETIMES HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO BECOME A DEMON.
SOMETHING THAT CAN'T BE ACHIEVED NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU PRAY CAN ONLY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY FIGHTING FOR IT YOURSELF...
A LONELY DEMON—

NO, NO!
WHAT YOU'VE BECOME SO FAR IS NOTHING MORE THAN A SOULLESS PUPPET.
THAT'S NOT SCARY AT ALL.
YOU, YOU'RE JUST TOO BY-THE-BOOK,
I WANT YOUR ACTING TO BE SPONTANEOUS, CHAOTIC..
BUT IT'S POINTLESS IF YOU CAN'T GET THE MOTIVATION FOR IT DOWN.
IT'S NOT TOO MUCH OF A PROBLEM IF YOU ACT WITHOUT SOUL,

LET THIS STAGE DISTURB THE AUDIENCE A LITTLE. AROUSE THEIR FEAR AND UNEASINESS



FUJINO-SUKE-SAN!

WHAT? YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHETHER OR NOT HE'LL SHOW AND YOU'RE STILL GOING TO WAIT HERE LIKE THIS?!
ARE YOU HERE BY YOURSELF? WHAT ABOUT REHEARSAL?
ABOUT THAT ...
BECAUSE TOLYA-SAN'S SCHEDULE IS PRETTY FULL, WHETHER HE COMES OR NOT IS USUALLY DECIDED ON THE FLY...
I'M NOT HERE DOING NOTHING!
THERE ARE A LOT OF DECISIONS THAT I STILL HAVE TO MAKE!
Yes, tons of them
AND, I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT IT'S EASIER FOR ME TO CONCENTRATE HERE—
OH! WHAT ABOUT YOU? DID REHEARSALS FINISH?
TODAY... IS A TEMPORARY HOLIDAY.
SO I WANTED TO COME HERE AND CHANGE MY MOOD A LITTLE— IS IT A PROBLEM FOR YOU?

LOOK, LOOK, ISN'T THIS KIND INTERESTING?
I ONLY FOUND OUT AFTER DOING SOME RESEARCH THAT THERE ARE LOTS OF MYTHS INVOLVING YOUKAI*!
THE NUMBER OF DIFFERENT TYPES IS STAGGERING!
*QC Note: Youkai – ghost; demon monster goblin

TOUYA-SAN?!
W-WHY ARE YOU TWO... HOLDING HANDS?
?
.....
.....

WHAT ARE THEY WHISPERING ABOUT?
I ONLY WANTED TO TALK ABOUT THE SITUATION AT HAND—
OF COURSE YOU CAN "TALK", BUT YOU CAN'T REQUEST ANYTHING

I FEEL... THEY DON'T EVEN LOOK AT US AS PEOPLE.
NATURALLY. FOR THEM, AN ACTOR WHO CAN'T PERFORM TO THEIR EXPECTATIONS IS USELESS...
THEY'RE LIKE DEVILS!
AND I THOUGHT YOU WERE COMING TO SPY ON THE COMPETITION, LOOKS LIKE I WAS OVER-ANALYZING IT.
.....
HA HA HA!
LOOK, MY LITTLE DEMON'S WORRYING ABOUT WHETHER SHE SHOULD COME AND INTERRUPT US OR NOT!
Hesitant
Unsure

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BUT,
NO MATTER HOW UNREASONABLE HER REQUESTS, YOU STILL WANT TO DO YOUR BEST TO ACCOMPLISH THEM.
ISN'T THAT BECAUSE SHE'S *YOUR* "DEMON"?

SO,
I STILL THINK,
YOU REALLY MAKE OTHERS ENVY YOU
IF YOU KNOW,
THEN DON'T LOOK AT HER LUSTFULLY IN FRONT OF ME
TO ME...

SHE'S MY PERSONAL "SPECIAL DEMON"!

Translator's Note

Kyōgen
A derivative theatre of Noh. It literally means "wild speech", mainly performed during the intermissions of Noh plays as comic relief. It's often performed in colloquial slang that common people can understand.

Kiyomoto tokiwazu
A style of narrative music in which one sings to the accompaniment of a shamisen used for kabuki dances.

Rakugo
A type of Japanese verbal entertainment. The lone storyteller uses only a paper fan and a small cloth as props and without standing up from the sitting position, the rakugo artist depicts a long and complicated comical story that involves the dialogue of two or more characters. The difference between the characters is depicted only through a change in pitch tone and a slight turn of the head.

AH...
SORRY, MY MISTAKE, LET'S DO IT AGAIN
WAIT!

明日の王様
ASHITA NO OUSAMA

UNIT 49

DO YOU REALLY MEAN IT...?
OF COURSE!
YOU ...
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS MAKING THINGS DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE?

SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
AS I WAS PASSING BY, I HAPPENED TO SEE... THAT'S SASAYA YUU-SAN OVER THERE, ISN'T IT?
YEAH. SHE'S ALSO HERE TO DISCUSS A PLAY.
SHE'S BEEN TERRIBLY BUSY, DEVOTING ALL HER TIME AND EFFORT TO THIS PRODUCTION

HAHAHA, THAT'S THE ONE!
IT'S NOT JUST FUJINOSUKE YUU MENTIONED TOUYA'S ALSO COMPLAINING BITTERLY!
OH, THE SAME ONE THAT HAS BEEN PUSHING FUJINOSUKE'S LIMITS?
THAT'S BECAUSE SHE BELIEVES IN HER ACTOR, "ICHII TOUYA".
REALLY? SHE LOOKS VERY MUCH AT EASE!
...THAT IS THE HIGHEST COMPLIMENT AN ACTOR CAN RECEIVE..
IF THAT'S THE CASE, FUJINOSUKE HAS NO CHANCE OF WINNING... DOES HE?

I JUST FEEL THAT FUJINOSUKE'S INSISTENCE ON DOING THAT PLAY WAS BECAUSE HE HOPED TO BE RECOGNIZED BY YUU-SAN.
NO, NO, I DIDN'T MEAN THAT... REALLY.
IS IT THAT SERIOUS? KAZUMA-KUN HAS HIGH EXPECTATIONS OF FUJINOSUKE-KUN, TOO.
THE KABUKI ACTORS WHO HAVE RECENTLY ACTED WITH FUJINOSUKE HAVE BEEN SAYING THAT...
THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN THINKING
AS AN ACTOR?

FUJINOSUKE HAS BEEN LOOKING MORE AND MORE ALLURING
Sip
.....
THIS KIND OF "IMPROVEMENT" DOES NOT GIVE HIM ANY ADVANTAGE, RIGHT?
AS AN ACTOR, THIS IS SOMETHING WORTH CELEBRATING..
BUT, AS A MAN—
TOUYA-SAN, PLEASE PAY MORE ATTENTION TO YOURSELF, ALL RIGHT?
pff
pff

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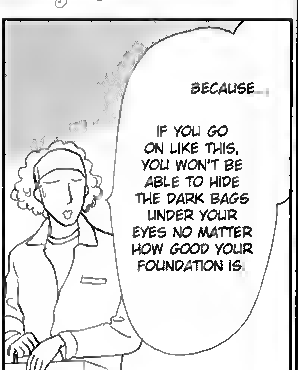


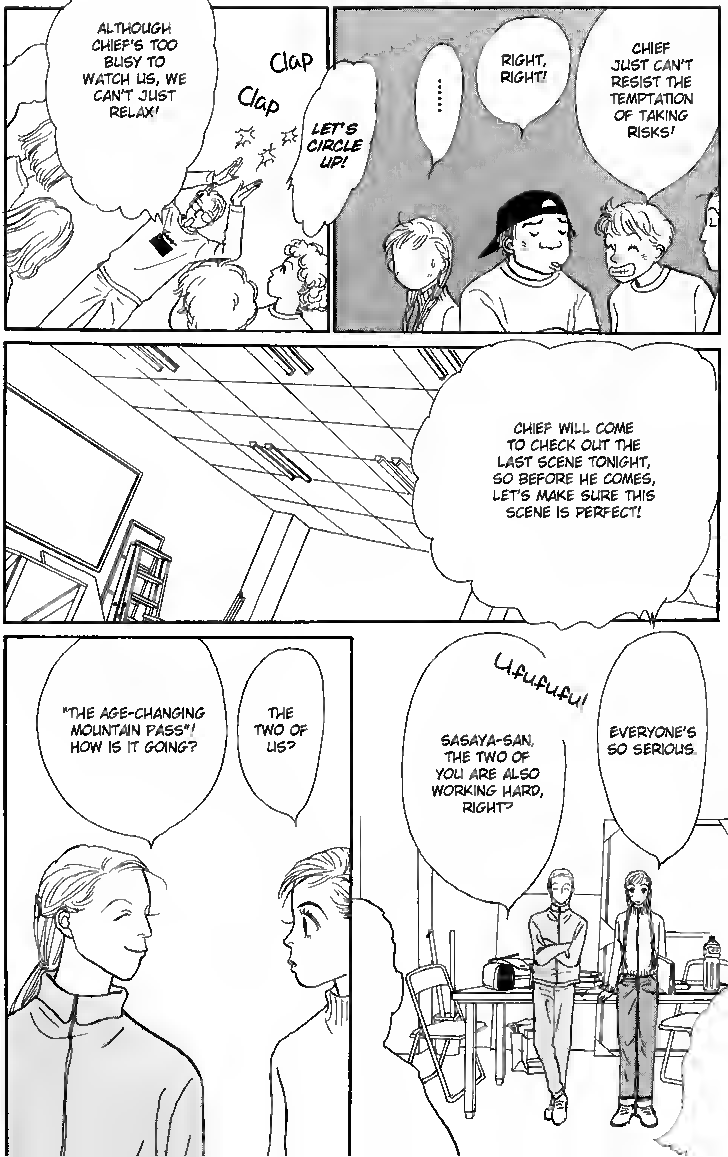
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO DO A SHOW WITH YOU AT SUCH A CRUCIAL JUNCTURE
WELL, WE ARE ONE OF THE HOTTEST GOSSIP TOPICS, AFTER ALL.
THE PERFORMANCE DATES HAVE BEEN DECIDED
I HEARD THAT MY SIDE WILL STAGE THE PLAY ONE WEEK BEFORE YOU.
I SUPPOSE SO

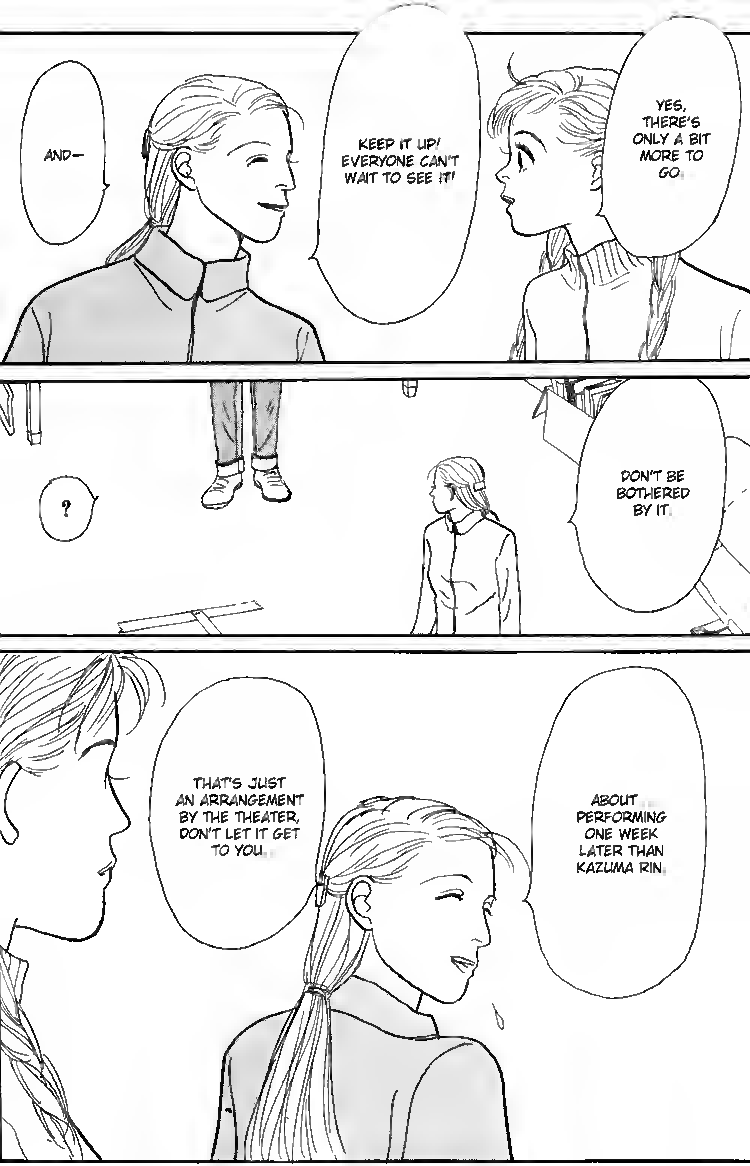
I CAN'T HELP IT. THIS IS WHAT THE THEATER BIGWIGS DECIDED.
DOESN'T IT BOTHER YOU EVEN A LITTLE? WE'RE THE ONES WHO WILL TAKE THE LEAD.
SHE WON'T MIND
YUU-SAN DOESN'T CARE EITHER?
THIS IS HER WORK AFTER ALL—
RIGHT NOW, THAT PERSON'S MIND IS FULLY OCCUPIED WITH THE STAGE, STAGE AND MORE STAGE.

IF I DIDN'T KNOW HER CHARACTER, I WOULD THINK SHE'S ...TORTURING ME ON PURPOSE.
...BUT, NO MATTER HOW STRICT SHE IS, I DON'T THINK SHE CAN GET YOU DOWN.
Hmph!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY IT.
I'M NOT THAT EASY TO DEAL WITH EITHER. HOW CAN I JUST SIT AND TAKE IT?

WATCH ME, SASAYA YUU--!
SHOW ME JUST HOW MUCH OF A DEMON YOU CAN BE! I DEFINITELY WON'T LOSE TO YOU!
AH CHOO

UHM, IT SEEMS THAT THE NATIONAL TREASURE "SAWAMURA SHINNOJOU" CAME ESPECIALLY TO REQUEST THIS.
DID YOU MEAN IT? CHIEF'S GOING TO DIRECT KABUKI!?
Right.
NO. MY NOSE SUDDENLY FELT ITCHY...
A COLD?
REALLY!? SUCH A TRADITIONAL AND CONSERVATIVE CIRCLE...
HA HA ...
ALTHOUGH IT'LL BE BASED ON KABUKI, THERE WILL BE MANY NOVEL, DARING AND CREATIVE ELEMENTS INCLUDED. IT WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE TO CALL IT AN ENTIRELY NEW FORM OF THEATER.
THAT'S THE KIND OF PERSON HE IS
THAT'S RIGHT. HE'S ALREADY WRITING THREE MONTHLY PUBLICATIONS, AND A PILE OF RADIO DRAMAS.
No way!
BUT, IS THAT REALLY ALL RIGHT? WON'T CHIEF'S WORKLOAD INCREASE AGAIN?


ALTHOUGH CHIEF'S TOO BUSY TO WATCH US, WE CAN'T JUST RELAX!
Clap
Clap
LET'S CIRCLE UP!
.....
RIGHT, RIGHT!
CHIEF JUST CAN'T RESIST THE TEMPTATION OF TAKING RISKS!
CHIEF WILL COME TO CHECK OUT THE LAST SCENE TONIGHT, SO BEFORE HE COMES, LET'S MAKE SURE THIS SCENE IS PERFECT!
"THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS"! HOW IS IT GOING?
THE TWO OF US?
Ufufufu!
SASAYA-SAN, THE TWO OF YOU ARE ALSO WORKING HARD, RIGHT?
EVERYONE'S SO SERIOUS.


AND—
KEEP IT UP! EVERYONE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE IT!
YES, THERE'S ONLY A BIT MORE TO GO.
?
DON'T BE BOTHERED BY IT.
THAT'S JUST AN ARRANGEMENT BY THE THEATER, DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU.
ABOUT PERFORMING ONE WEEK LATER THAN KAZUMA RIN.

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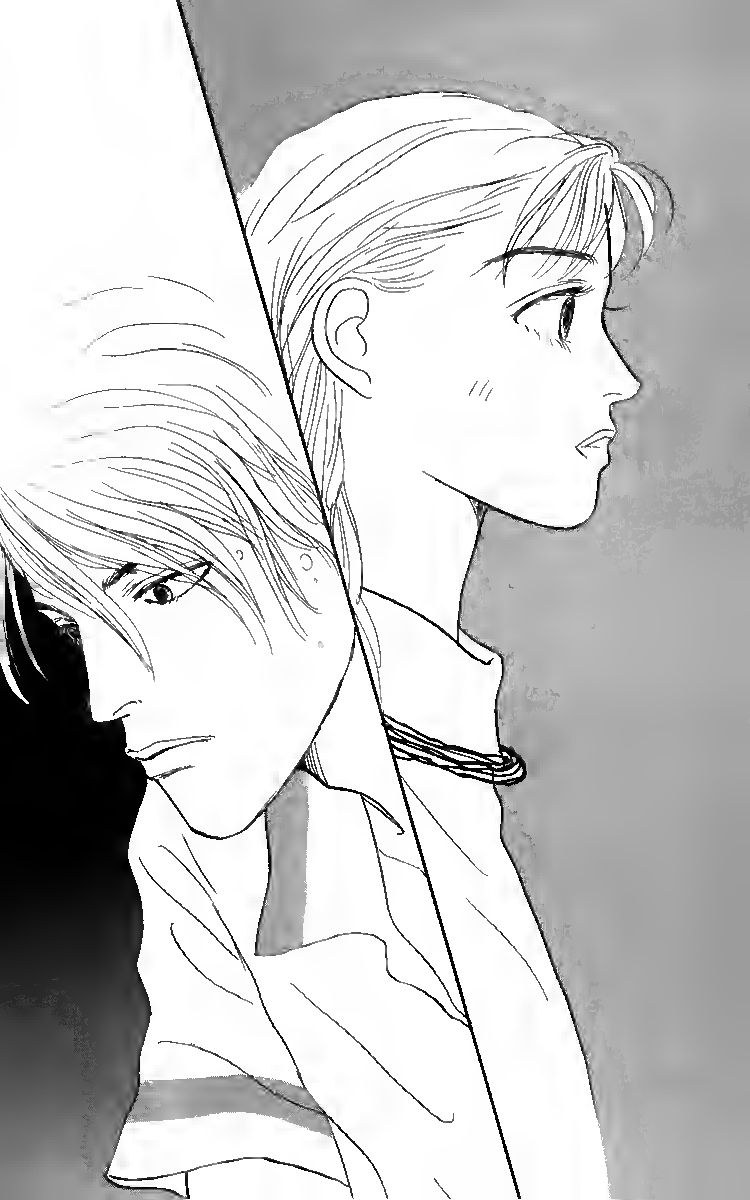
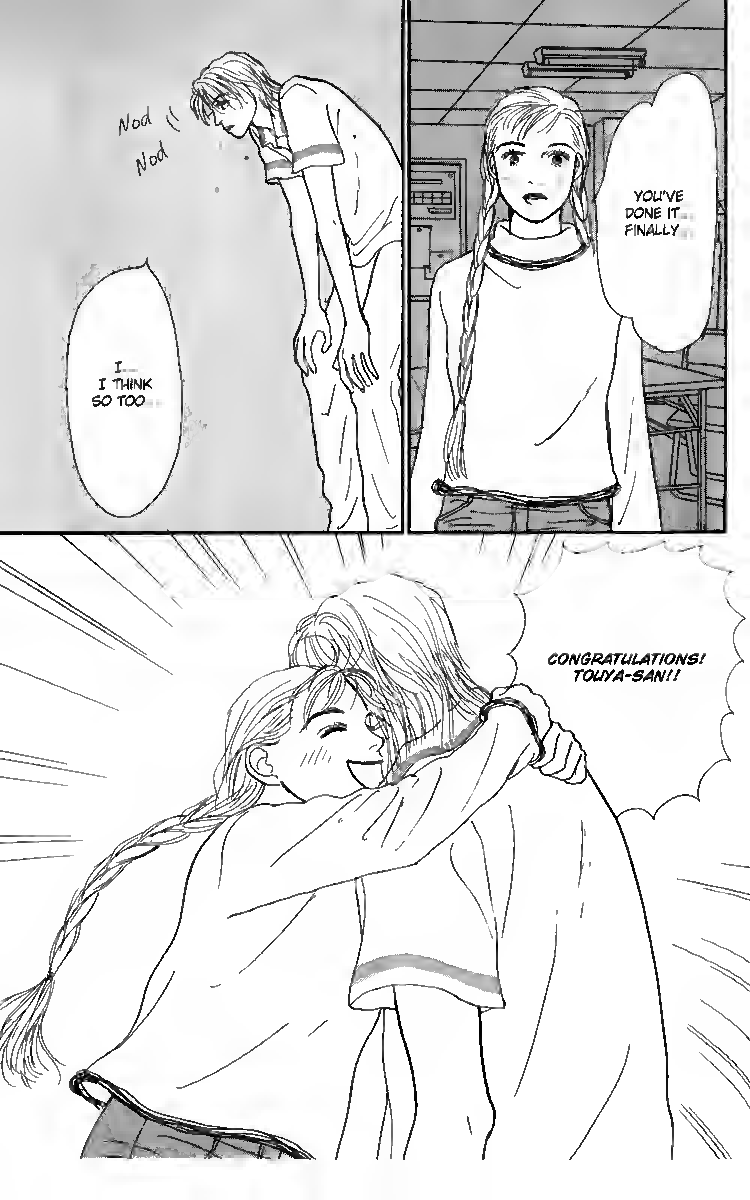
BUT
THE PLAY WHICH BELONGS TO TOLIYA-SAN AND ME, WILL ACTUALLY BE PUT UP FIRST BY SOMEONE ELSE,
BECAUSE...
TO US, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO GIVE IT OUR ALL,
NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO QUIBBLE OVER SUCH TRIVIAL ISSUES
TO MAKE THIS PERFORMANCE AS PERFECT AS POSSIBLE.

Smile
VERY GOOD, THIS IS IT!
pat pat
DON'T FORGET THIS FEELING!
WHAT'S UP?
WHY'S YOUR EXPRESSION SO COMPLEX?
DON'T YOU FEEL HAPPY?

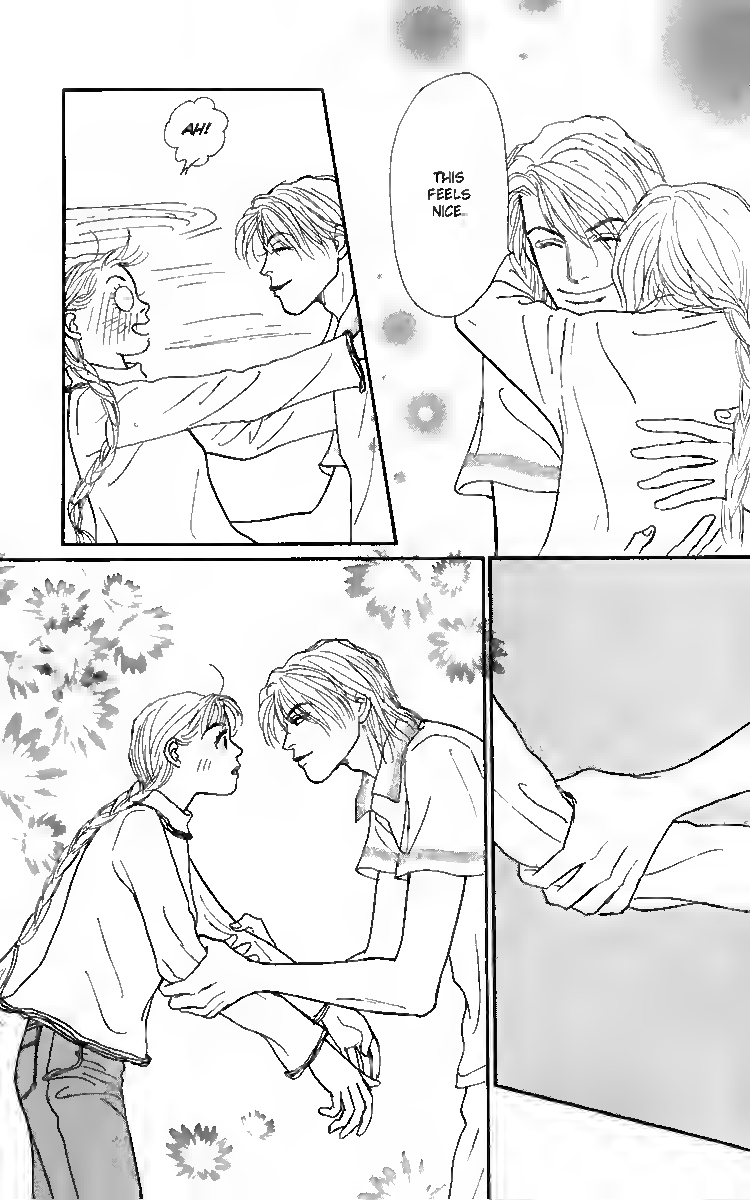
A CRITIC ONCE SAID THAT WHEN YOU'RE FULLY ABSORBED IN A DRAMA, THERE'LL BE FEELINGS RESEMBLING FALLING IN LOVE BETWEEN THE DIRECTOR AND THE ACTORS
AT SUCH A MOMENT, IT'LL BE MORE APT IF THE OTHER PARTY IS OF A DIFFERENT SEX—
YOU WANT TO FALL IN LOVE WITH ME? YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID SO EARLIER! I WELCOME—
Turns and flees
Ku ku ku
OH BOY! HE FLED REALLY FAST!
Hmph!
That's so rude!
Pfft!

YUU-SAN—
MY "AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" IS FINALLY COMPLETED

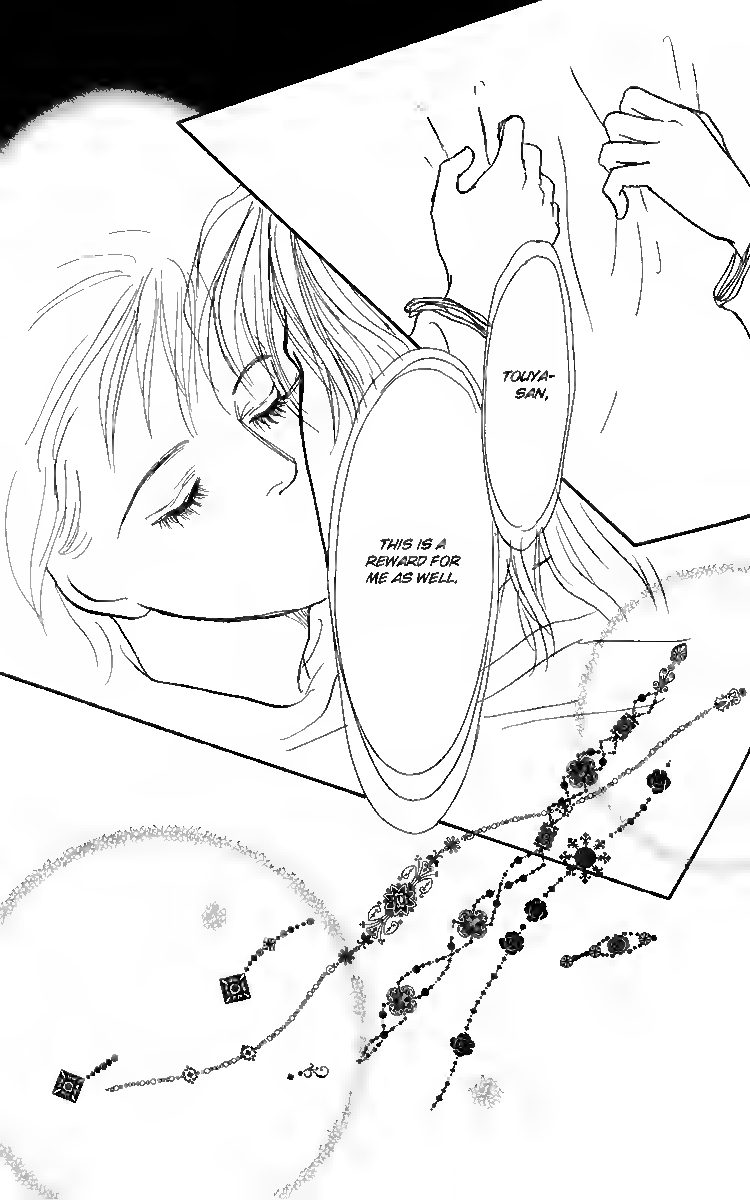



Nod
Nod
I...
I THINK
SO TOO
YOU'VE
DONE IT...
FINALLY
CONGRATULATIONS!
TOUYA-SAN!!

TSK! WHAT SHARP EYES!
WE JUST NEED TO ADJUST THE TIMING FOR THE THIRD SCENE AND THE PLAY WILL BE PERFECT!


AH!
THIS FEELS NICE.

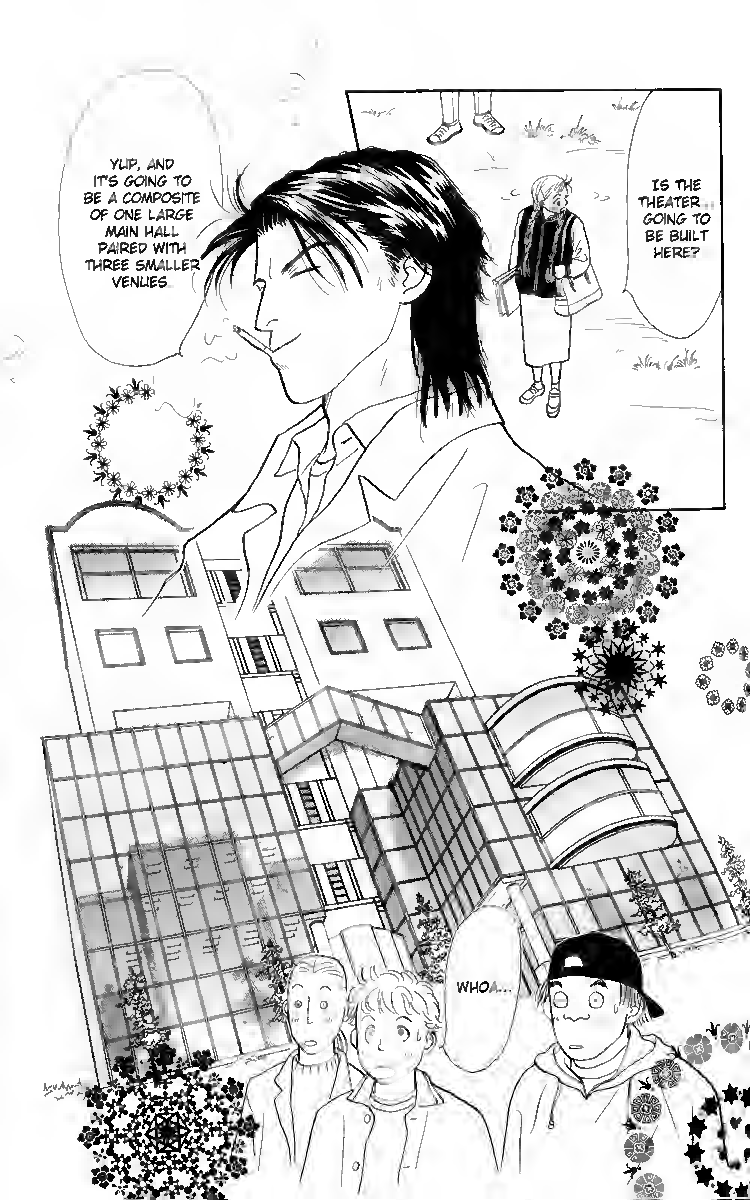
I'VE FINALLY OVERCOME THE DEVIL'S TORTURE. I'M COLLECTING MY REWARD


TOUYA-SAN,
THIS IS A REWARD FOR ME AS WELL.

FROM NOW ON, WILL I EVER BE ABLE TO GIVE UP THE HAPPINESS OF HAVING YOU ALL TO MYSELF?
Kanae

SOLD OUT
The Age-Changing Mountain Pass
THE AGECHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS
SAKATOSE NO
O TOUGE
SOLD OUT

明日の王様
ASHITA NO OUSAMA
UNIT 50


IS THE THEATER GOING TO BE BUILT HERE?
YUP, AND IT'S GOING TO BE A COMPOSITE OF ONE LARGE MAIN HALL PAIRED WITH THREE SMALLER VENUES.
WHOA...

THAT'S SO COOL! ARE YOU GOING TO BUILD IT YOURSELF?
OF COURSE, OF COURSE!
You've got a whole new respect for me, right?
THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
IT'S ONLY WITH SOME CORPORATE FUNDING AND THE COOPERATION OF OTHER COMPANIES, ALONG WITH NUMEROUS ADVERTISERS THAT THIS IS POSSIBLE
BUT, CHIEF IS THE ONE PUSHING ALONG MOST OF THE ORGANIZING AND GETTING THE CONNECTIONS
SO HE'S BEEN BUSY WITH THIS STUFF! THAT'S WHY HE HASN'T BEEN COMING TO REHEARSALS LATELY!
AH!
THERE'S ALREADY A BIG PILE OF WORK, AND NOW HE'S ADDING MORE TO HIS LOAD WITH SOMETHING LIKE THIS...
DON'T TELL ME THAT THE REASON FOR TAKING ON SO MANY JOBS LATELY IS TO GATHER FUNDS FOR THIS?
THAT'S PROBABLY IT. TO BUILD A THEATER OF THIS SCALE, IT WON'T BE ENOUGH NO MATTER HOW MUCH MONEY YOU HAVE TO BURN!

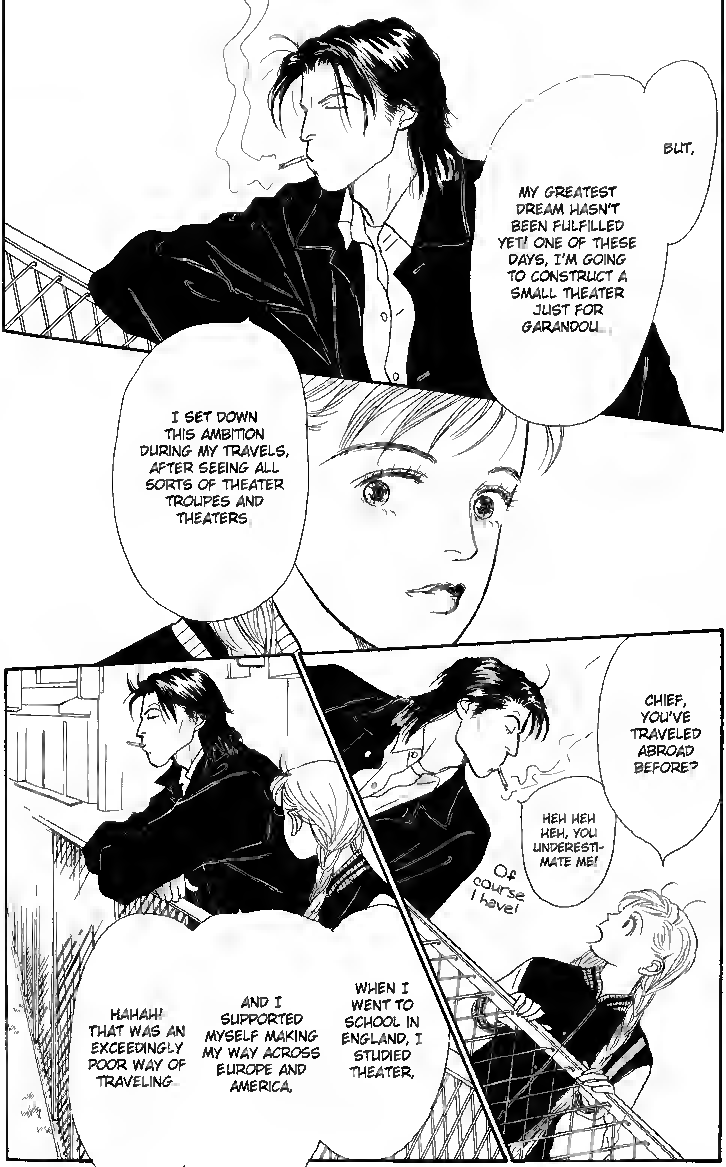
PETS ARE ADORABLE!

Sigh...

LOOKS LIKE WE'RE NOT GONNA BE ABLE TO SHAKE OFF THIS POVERTY!

HE ACTUALLY THOUGHT OF BUILDING A THEATER... CHIEF REALLY IS AMAZING!

HAHAHA. BUILDING A HOUSE ISN'T ALL THAT DIFFICULT, THE PROBLEM IS MAINTAINING IT


BUT,
MY GREATEST DREAM HASN'T BEEN FULFILLED YET! ONE OF THESE DAYS, I'M GOING TO CONSTRUCT A SMALL THEATER JUST FOR GARANDOU...
I SET DOWN THIS AMBITION DURING MY TRAVELS, AFTER SEEING ALL SORTS OF THEATER TROUPES AND THEATERS
CHIEF, YOU'VE TRAVELED ABROAD BEFORE?
HEH HEH HEH, YOU UNDERESTIMATE ME!
Of course I have!
WHEN I WENT TO SCHOOL IN ENGLAND, I STUDIED THEATER,
AND I SUPPORTED MYSELF MAKING MY WAY ACROSS EUROPE AND AMERICA.
HAHAH! THAT WAS AN EXCEEDINGLY POOR WAY OF TRAVELING

...OH
YOU HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO USE ALL THE SUPPORT YOU CAN GET FROM NATIONAL COMMITTEES, TELEVISION STATIONS AND PUBLISHERS!
AH! I HAVE TO TELL YOU, IF YOU PLAN ON GOING ABROAD TO STUDY THEATER, USING YOUR OWN MONEY ISN'T THE WAY TO GO.
AH!
W-WHAT PLAN!? THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT—
REALLY? RIGHT, HOW'S "THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" GOING SO FAR? ALMOST DONE?
IT'S STILL TOO EARLY! AS SOON AS I SOLVE ONE PROBLEM, ANOTHER PROBLEM POPS UP! I'M SO BUSY THAT THERE'S HARDLY TIME TO BREATHE

NOT YET, CHIEF.
IT ISN'T OVER YET.
GRANNY,

EVEN THE USUALLY CONFIDENT ICHII TOUYA
HAS HAD HIS BARRIERS BROKEN, AND IS SO FULL OF TENSION THAT IT SEEMS TO SEEP OUT WITH EVERY BREATH HE TAKES...
AND ALL THAT HE HAS TO DEPEND ON IS INFINITESIMAL LITTLE ME.
UNTIL WE PULL DOWN THE CURTAINS ON THE FINALE,
MY WORK ON THIS STAGE WON'T BE FINISHED.

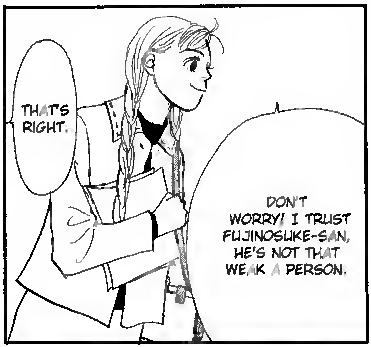
KAZUMA AND FUJINOSUKE'S PLAY IS OPENING TOMORROW!
YEAH!
THERE-FORE,
I AM STILL NOT EVEN CLOSE TO DONE YET.
AND NOW...

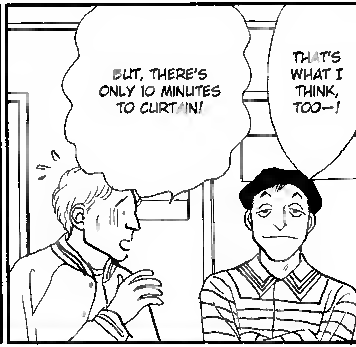
HERE IS ANOTHER PERSON...
EH?
THE CROWD OUTSIDE IS KIND OF SCARY!
Click
FUJINO-SUKE?

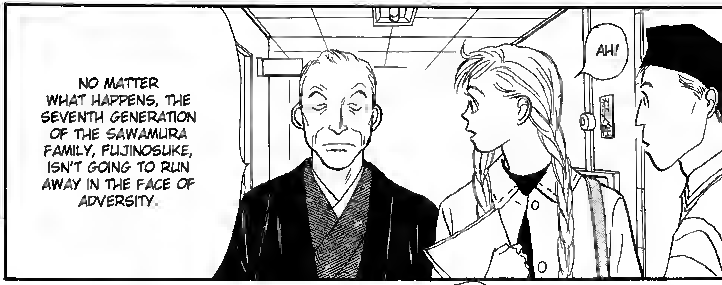
C-CALM DOWN! NOTHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN...!
THERE'S N-NOTHING TO BE NERVOUS ABOUT!
NO MATTER WHAT I'VE TAKEN ON A LOT MORE THAN THIS ON THE KABUKI STAGE..
NOTHING ...

I...
I CAN'T!!
STAFF
KAZUMA-SAN
AH!
STAFF

— I DON'T THINK IT'S GOING TO BE A PROBLEM, BUT, I CAN'T FIND HIM ANYWHERE...
FUJI-NOSUKE-SAN?!
WHAT?!
IT'S OKAY!
FUJINOSUKE-SAN'S PROBABLY ONLY LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO BE ALONE, TO LET HIMSELF CALM DOWN!


THAT'S RIGHT.
DON'T WORRY! I TRUST FUJINOSUKE-SAN, HE'S NOT THAT WEAK A PERSON.

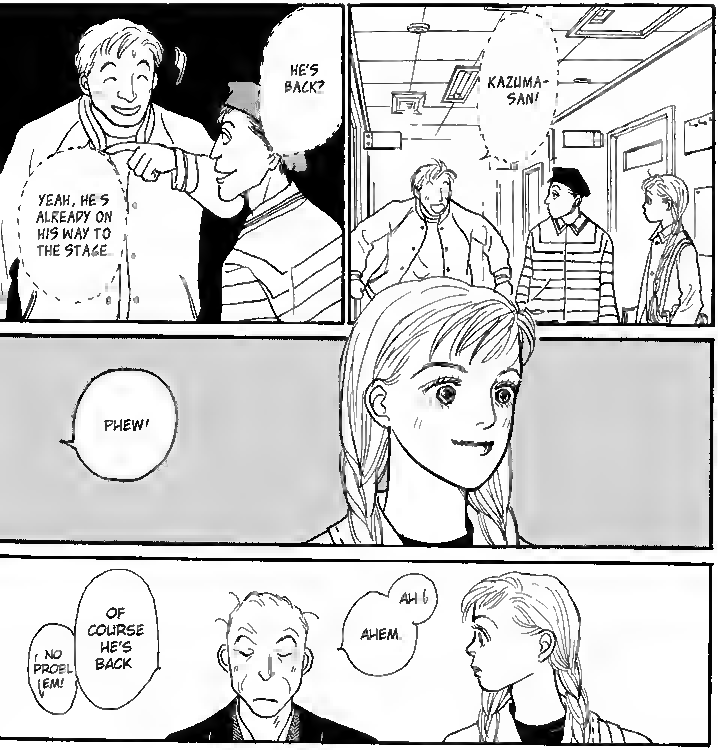

BUT, THERE'S ONLY 10 MINUTES TO CURTAIN!
THAT'S WHAT I THINK, TOO—!

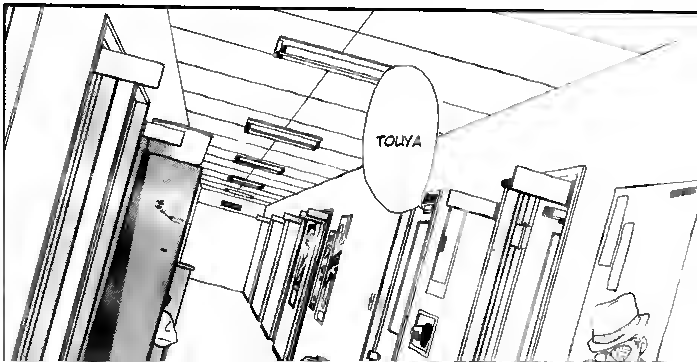

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, THE SEVENTH GENERATION OF THE SAWAMURA FAMILY, FUJINOSUKE, ISN'T GOING TO RUN AWAY IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY.
AH!

MY SUCCESSOR, CULTIVATED BY MY OWN HANDS, CANNOT BE THIS USELESS
HE'LL NEVER LOSE TO SOMETHING AS SMALL AS STAGE-FRIGHT!

Breathes...

NO MATTER HOW NERVOUS...
NO MATTER HOW SCARED...


HE'S BACK?
YEAH, HE'S ALREADY ON HIS WAY TO THE STAGE.
KAZUMA-SAN!
PHEW!
NO PROBLEM!
OF COURSE HE'S BACK
AHEM.
AH!


TOUYA

WHEN THE SHOOT ENDS, EVEN IF I WANTED TO GO, I WOULD MISS IT. ANYWAYS, SHE'S GOING FOR SURE, LISTENING TO HER TALK ABOUT IT IS ENOUGH.
ISN'T TODAY THE OPENING FOR KAZUMA-SAN AND FUJINOSUKE-SAN'S PLAY?
AREN'T YOU GOING TO SEE IT?
I'M BEGINNING TO GET HOW SPECIAL SHE IS... COMPETING WITH KAZUMA WHO'S AT A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LEVEL IS FINE,
BUT IF I WERE HER, I'D NEVER GO TO SEE MY OPPONENT'S PLAY, THAT'S LIKE TRYING TO ADD FUEL TO THE FIRE...IS SHE STUPID OR IS SHE JUST CRAZY?

SHE'S PROBABLY... BECOME A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE.
RUSTLE
FWOOSH
RUSTLE

Rustle
Rustle
Rustle
RATTLE
RATTLE
whoooosh
My, my, my!
Honored guest, why have you traveled to a place such as this?

Fu fu fu fu
This dilapidated little tea house has only this old man to guard it.
No one really ventures by here anymore, so only I while away the time here.
It is rare that a guest passes by
If you would, do you care to chat with me a while?
AS PER THE INVITATION OF THE OLD MAN, THE TRAVELER BEGAN TALKING ABOUT ALL THAT HE'D SEEN IN HIS TRAVELS,
THE OLD MAN RESPONDED AVIDLY, HAPPILY LISTENING TO THE TRAVELER SPIN HIS TALE.
SLOWLY, THE CONVERSATION MOVED ONTO THE TRAVELER HIMSELF...

ALL OF THE SINS HE HAD COMMITTED.
A PAST NOT WORTH LOOKING BACK ON—
AS IF A MAN POSSESSED, THE TRAVELER COULDN'T STOP HIS WORDS.
WITH EVERY SENTENCE THE TRAVELER SPOKE,
THE OLD MAN SLOWLY, SLOWLY BEGAN CHANGING SHAPE...

Oh!
What's wrong? Why do you have such a fearsome look on your face?
Ku ku ku!
I know...
Why you have come to a place such as this...
It's completely clear to me now...

I'LL LET IT GO FOR TODAY PLUS, YOU DIDN'T GO EITHER, EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WAS MORE EXPECTED!
...YOU DIDN'T GO SEE FUJINOSUKE BACKSTAGE, IS THAT OKAY?
I THOUGHT... I SHOULD LET IT GO TODAY AS WELL...
THIS PLAY IS REALLY AWESOME!
KAZUMA-SAN REALLY DESERVES TO BE CALLED A GENIUS!

FUJINO-SUKE-SAN'S ACTING IS ALSO BEYOND REPROACH! IT WAS SO EXCITING!
R
R
R
R
TOUYA-SAN!
JUST AS I THOUGHT
IT WAS GREAT! IT WAS AWESOME! I EVEN HAD GOOSE BUMPS!

NEXT WEEK IT'LL BE OUR TURN TO GO ON STAGE!
YEAH!
IT'S REALLY INCREDIBLE! GENIUS!!
HEY, HEY, YOU STILL REMEMBER, RIGHT?

DO YOU REALLY UNDERSTAND?
YEAH--!
Ashita no Ousama UNIT 50 - End

ASHITA NO OUSAMA
明日の王様
UNIT 51

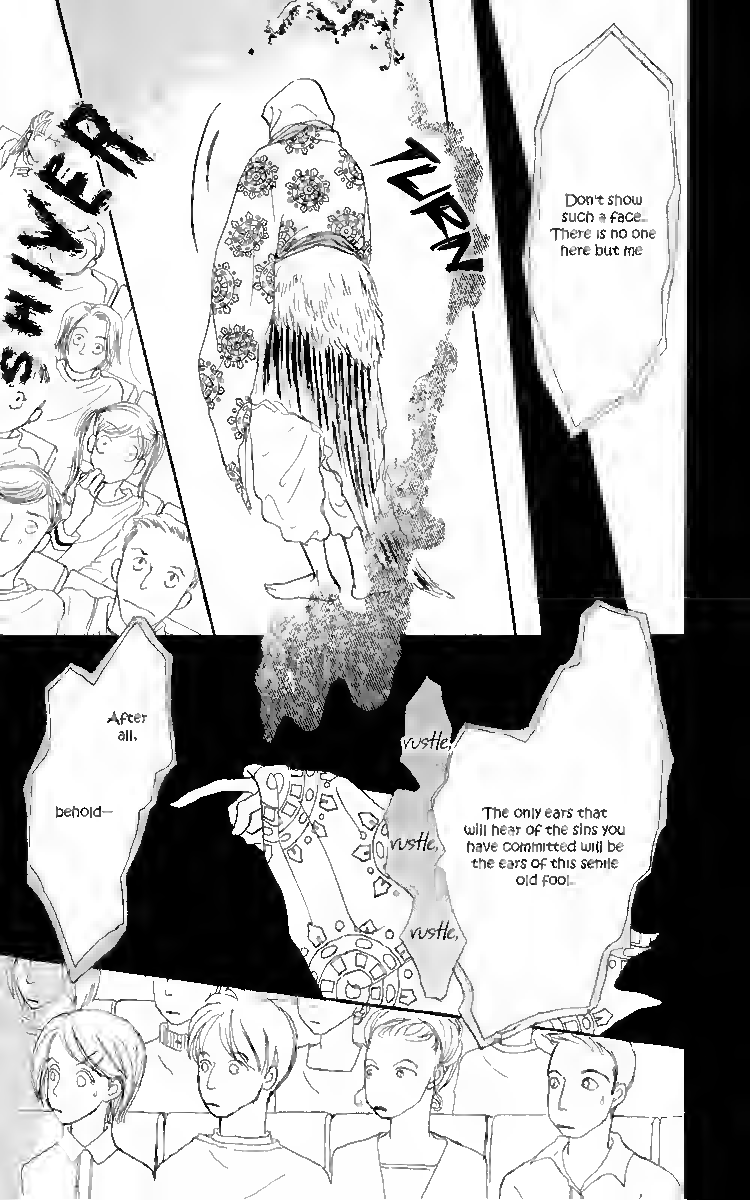
GRANNY,
KAZUMA-SAN AND FUJINOSUKE-SAN'S PLAY, WHICH HAD A HIGHLY ADMIRED START, FINALLY HAS FINISHED.
THUS,
TOMORROW, AT LAST,
OUR PLAY WILL DRAW ITS CURTAINS.

逆境の峠
SAKATOSE NO TOUGE
逆境の峠
SAKATOSE NO TOUGE
THE FIRST VIEWING OF A SHOW IS ALWAYS MEMORABLE.
HOWEVER, ONLY THE SUPERIOR SHOW WILL BE ENGRAVED INTO MEMORY.
SO,

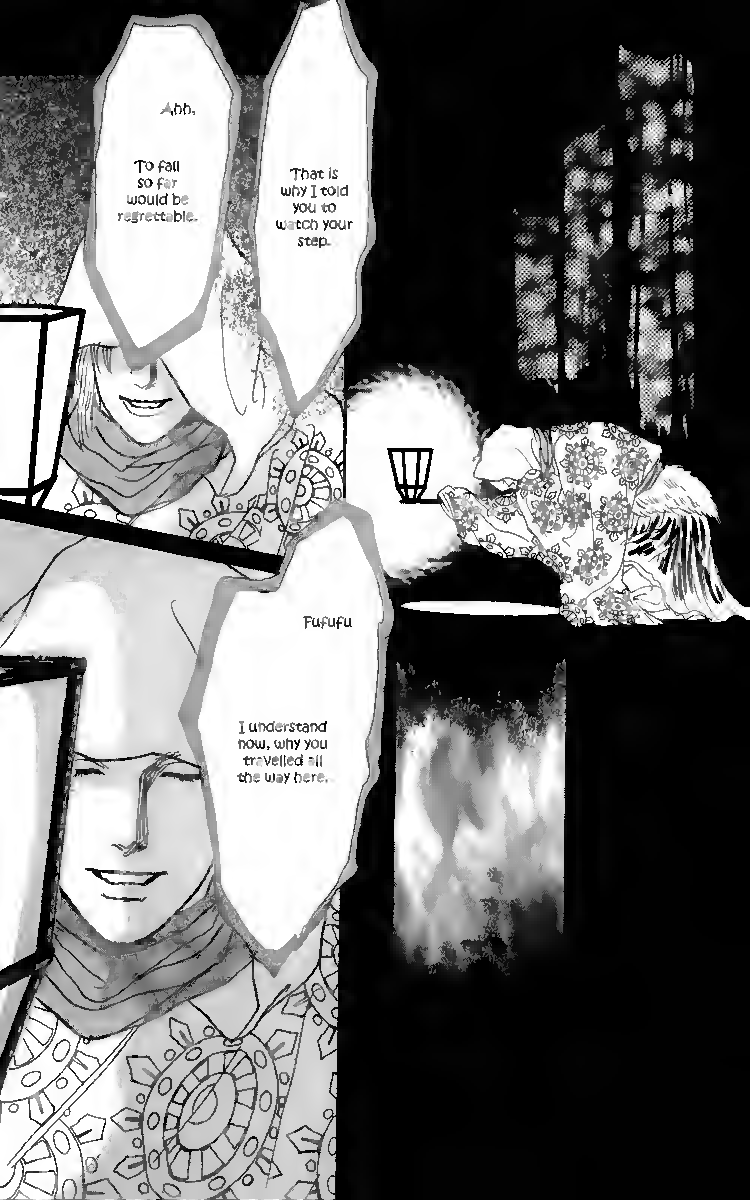
THE ONE THAT FOLLOWS WILL CERTAINLY BE COMPARED TO THE FIRST.

Be-dump
As you can see, it's just a miserable tea house...
Well, I can't do a damned thing about the exterior, but—
Come and rest, traveler. Lighten your load and tell me your tale.
My goodness, such a mischievous child, stop teasing me
Ha ha ha ^
Giggle

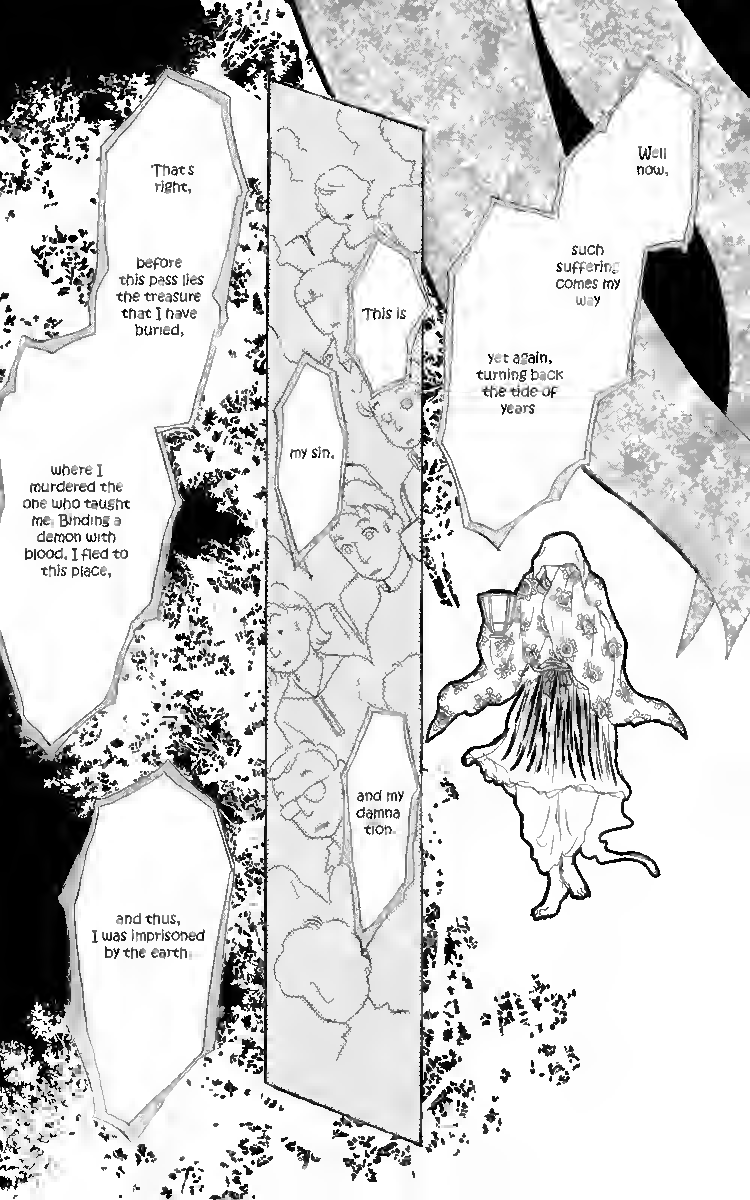
SUDDENLY,
ANXIETY REIGNS.
HAS HE SAID TOO MUCH?
SELF-RIGHTEOUS
JUST NOW,
WHAT WERE YOU CHATTERING ABOUT? THIS OLD MAN—
OLD MAN...?
Oh, so you see an old man before you? Such talk of strange things...
Kuku kuku

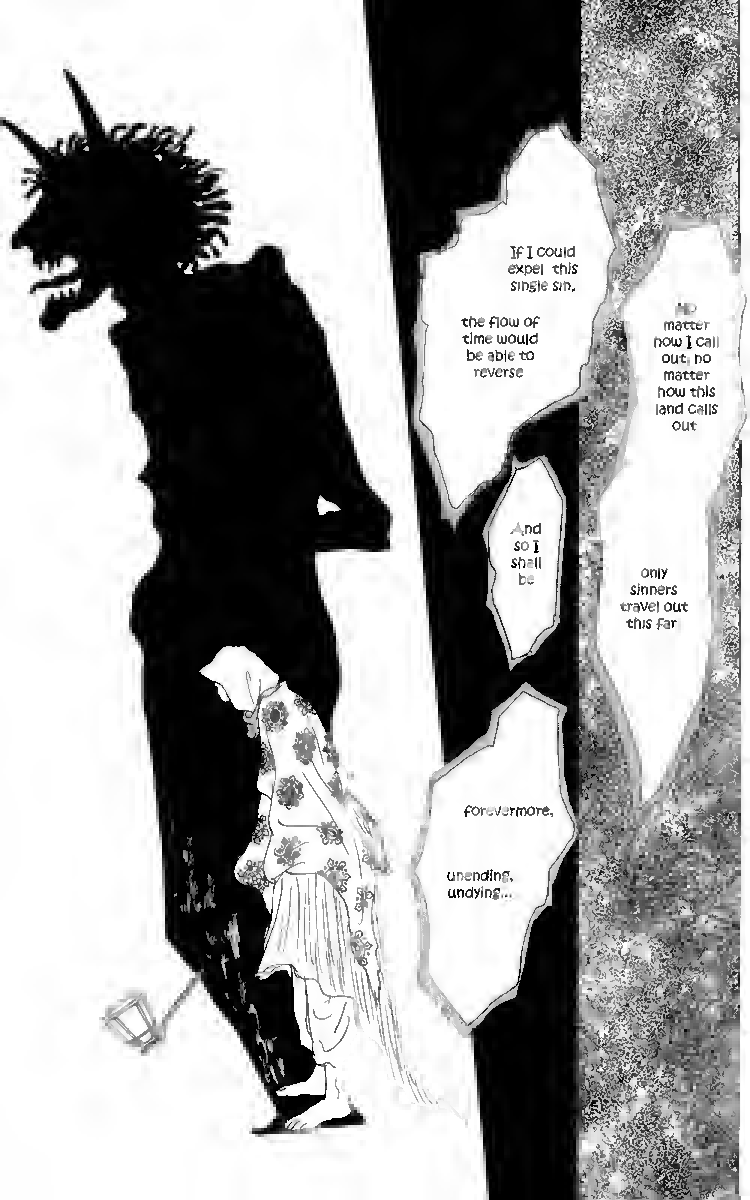

SHIVER
TURN
Don't show such a face... There is no one here but me
After all,
behold—
rustle,
rustle,
rustle,
The only ears that will hear of the sins you have committed will be the ears of this senile old fool.

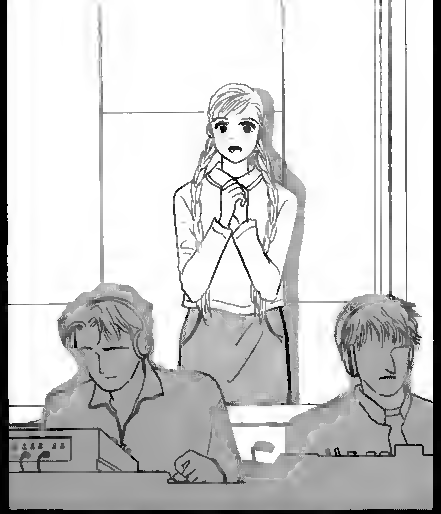
BEYOND THAT POINTED FINGER WAS AN UNENDING ABYSS.
Merely the people whose lives you have stolen.
RUN, DEAR TRAVELER, FLEE FROM THIS PLACE.
FOR NO LONGER DOES HE MOVE LIKE AN OLD ....
whisper
...HEY
I THINK HIS VOICE CHANGED... IT'S PROBABLY JUST ME, BUT,
whisper

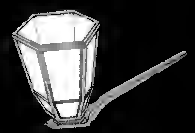

Ahh.
To fall so far would be regrettable.
That is why I told you to watch your step.
Fufufu
I understand now, why you travelled all the way here.

That's right, of course you can't scream
You came all the way to this god-forsaken path because you believed, didn't you?
You heard it from a murdered man, didn't you?
That before this pass lies treasure
THE TRAVELER FALLS INTO THE ABYSS
WHERE THE BONES GATHERED IN TOWERING PILES.
Kukkukku
I'm sure you won't be sad down there, together with your comrades.

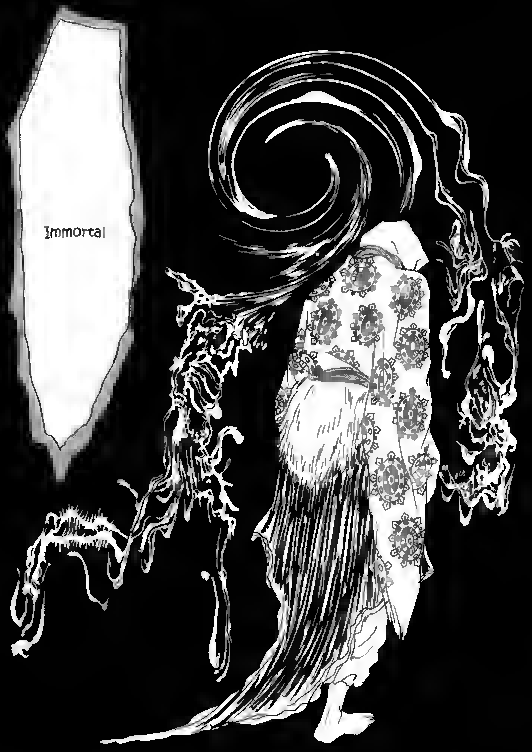

That's right,
before this pass lies the treasure that I have buried,
where I murdered the one who taught me. Binding a demon with blood, I fled to this place,
and thus, I was imprisoned by the earth.
This is
my sin,
and my damnation.
Well now,
such suffering comes my way
yet again, turning back the tide of years


If I could expel this single sin,
the flow of time would be able to reverse
And so I shall be
forevermore,
unending, undying...
No matter how I call out, no matter how this land calls out
only sinners travel out this far



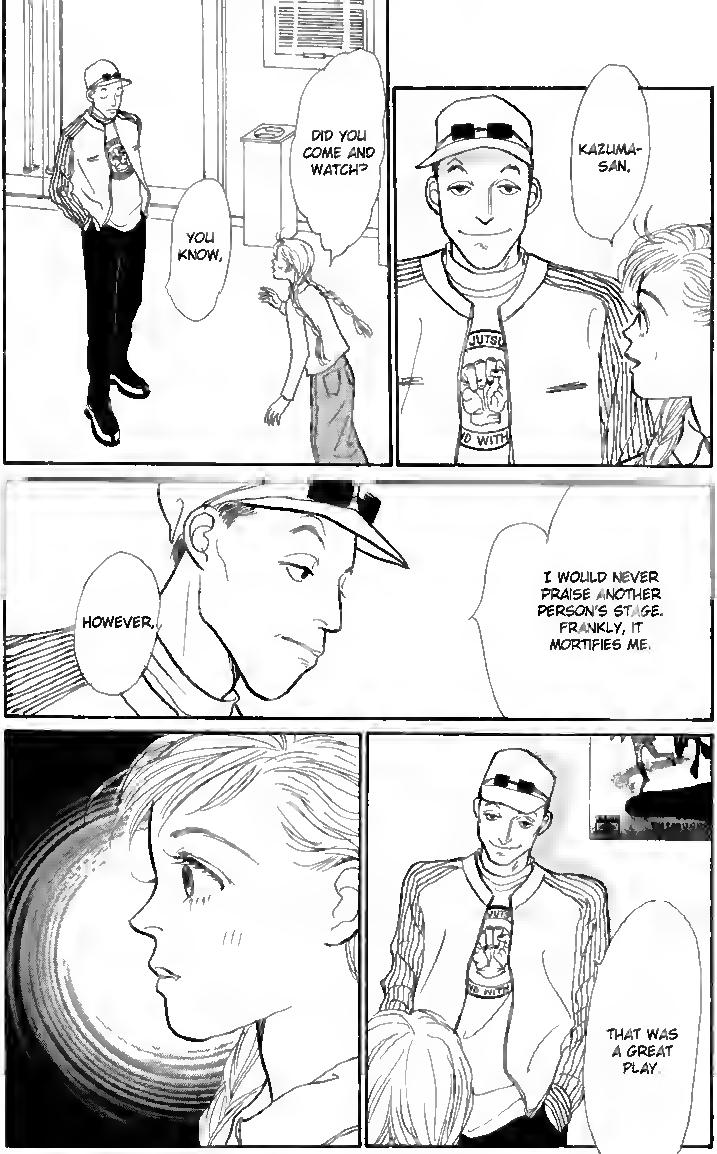


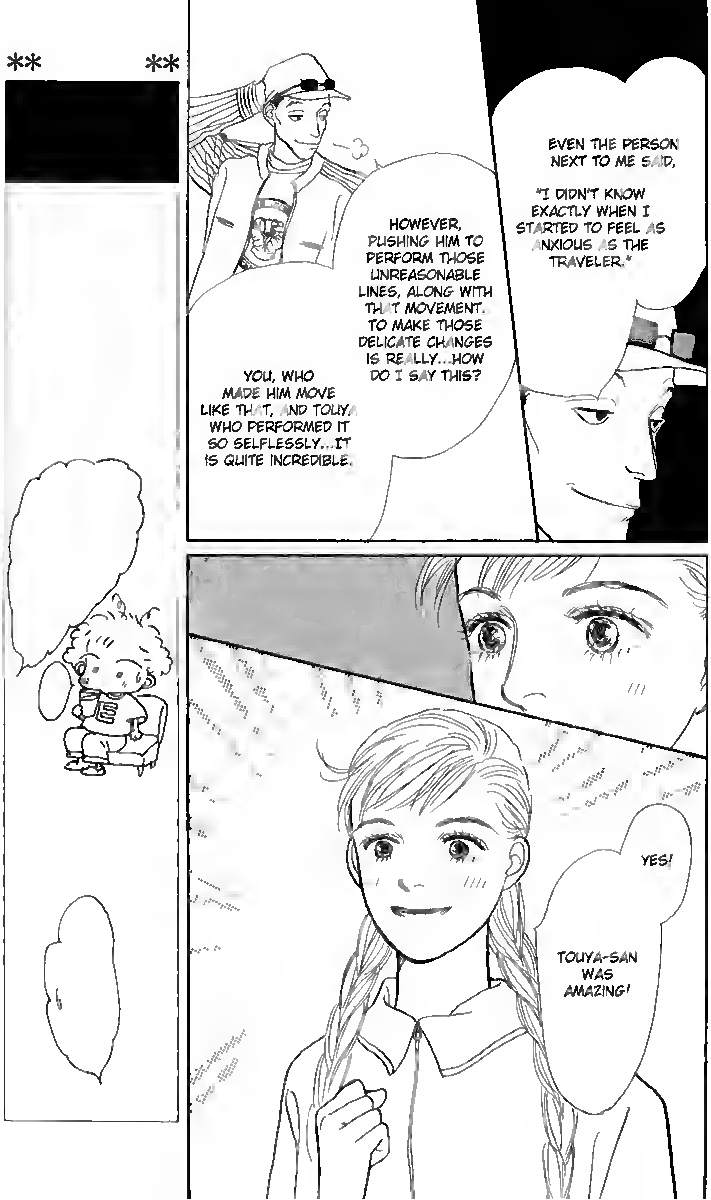
Immortal



GRANNY...
Thunderous Applause

SFX: CHEERS
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
YUU-SAN


DID YOU COME AND WATCH?
YOU KNOW,
KAZUMA-SAN.
I WOULD NEVER PRAISE ANOTHER PERSON'S STAGE. FRANKLY, IT MORTIFIES ME.
HOWEVER,
THAT WAS A GREAT PLAY.


**
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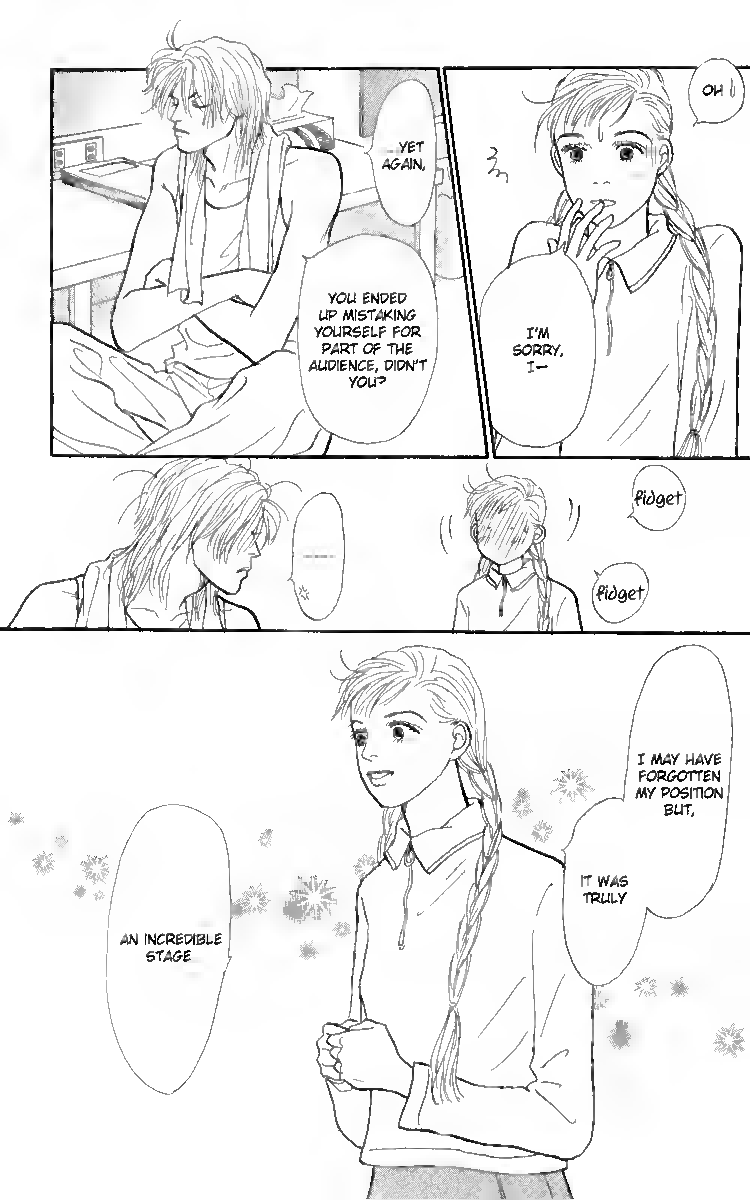
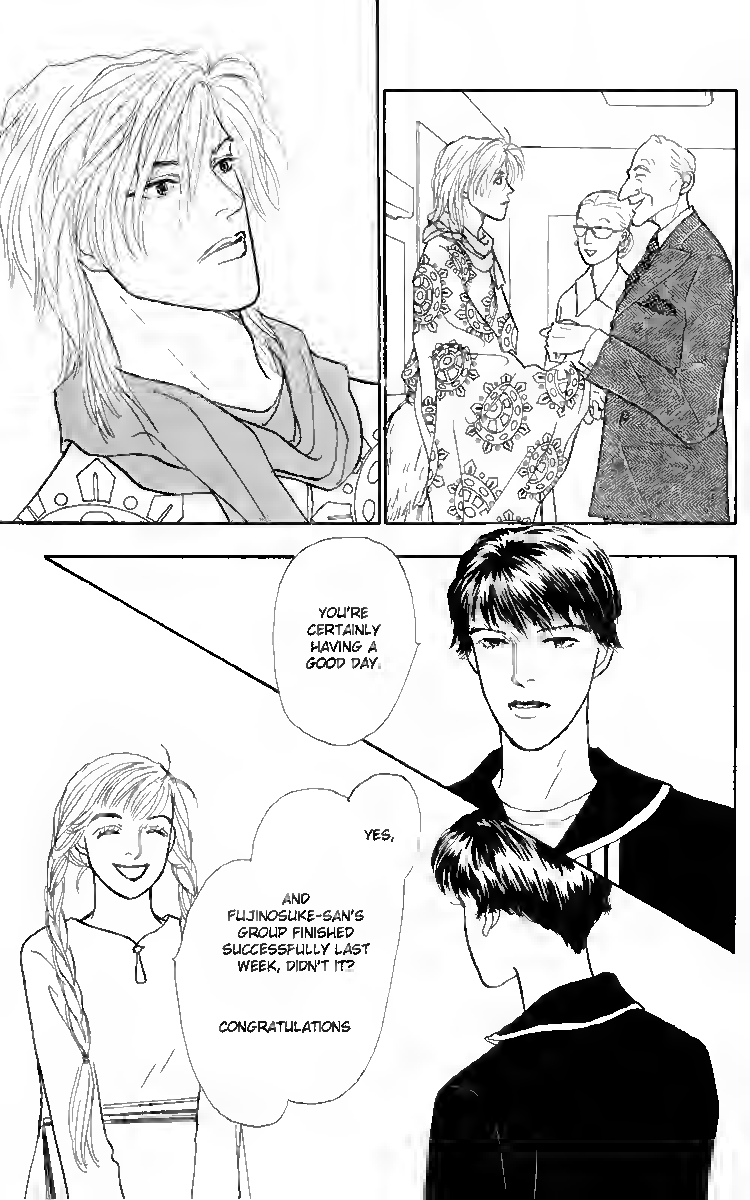
EVEN THE PERSON NEXT TO ME SAID,
"I DIDN'T KNOW EXACTLY WHEN I STARTED TO FEEL AS ANXIOUS AS THE TRAVELER."
HOWEVER, PUSHING HIM TO PERFORM THOSE UNREASONABLE LINES, ALONG WITH THAT MOVEMENT. TO MAKE THOSE DELICATE CHANGES IS REALLY...HOW DO I SAY THIS?
YOU, WHO MADE HIM MOVE LIKE THAT, AND TOUYA WHO PERFORMED IT SO SELFLESSLY...IT IS QUITE INCREDIBLE.
YES!
TOUYA-SAN WAS AMAZING!

EXHAUSTED
TOUYA-SAN
WHERE WERE YOU?
I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW MANY TIMES THE CURTAIN CALL ASKED FOR YOU.
YOU'RE THE STAGE DIRECTOR, AND WE WERE SUPPOSED TO GO ONSTAGE TOGETHER, I GOT WORRIED, YOU KNOW...


...YET AGAIN,
YOU ENDED UP MISTAKING YOURSELF FOR PART OF THE AUDIENCE, DIDN'T YOU?
OH!
I'M SORRY, I—
fidget
fidget
I MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN MY POSITION BUT,
IT WAS TRULY
AN INCREDIBLE STAGE

GRANNY,
IT REALLY WAS AN INCREDIBLE STAGE

Who-o-o-o
Hey, hey
EVEN THIS MAGAZINE FEATURED IT, AND THEY'RE ALL RAVE REVIEWS.
Cool, huh
WELL, I UNDERSTAND WHY IT'S SO POPULAR BUT, I WONDER IF THAT FOREIGNER UNDERSTOOD THE PLAY.
A FOREIGNER?
AH, I THINK I SAW THAT TOO, BUT SOMEHOW I THINK THAT GUY LOOKED *REALLY* IMPORTANT ..


YOU'RE CERTAINLY HAVING A GOOD DAY.
YES,
AND FUJINOSUKE-SAN'S GROUP FINISHED SUCCESSFULLY LAST WEEK, DIDN'T IT?
CONGRATULATIONS

?
FUJINO-SUKE-SAN?
AND FROM THIS POINT ON, MY PLAY WILL BE TAKING OVER FROM THAT WONDERFUL STAGE. THANK YOU.
HOW YOU COULD SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT AFTER WATCHING TOUYA-SAN'S STAGE...
NO,
THAT WAS INDEED, THE BEST OF MY ABILITIES, AND WITH THAT, I'M CONTENT...
EVEN KAZUMA-SAN SAID SO

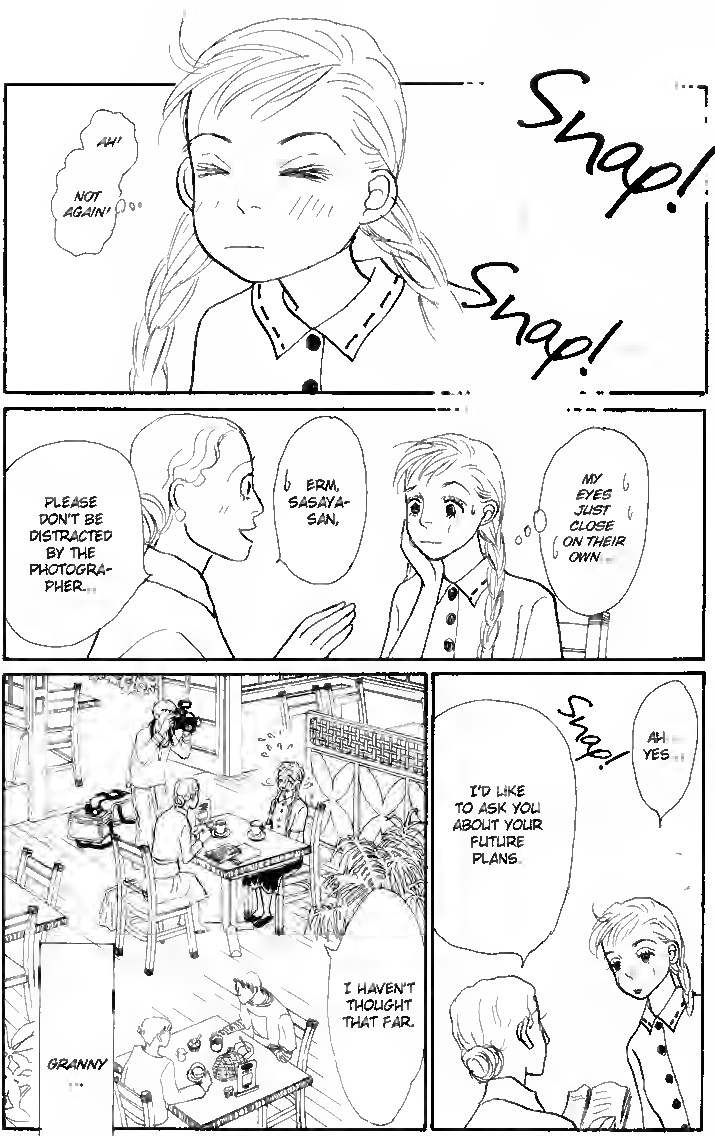
GRANNY,
THUS, OUR "AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" DREW ITS CURTAINS TO GREATER SUCCESS THAN WHAT WE THOUGHT POSSIBLE.
YES!
HOWEVER,

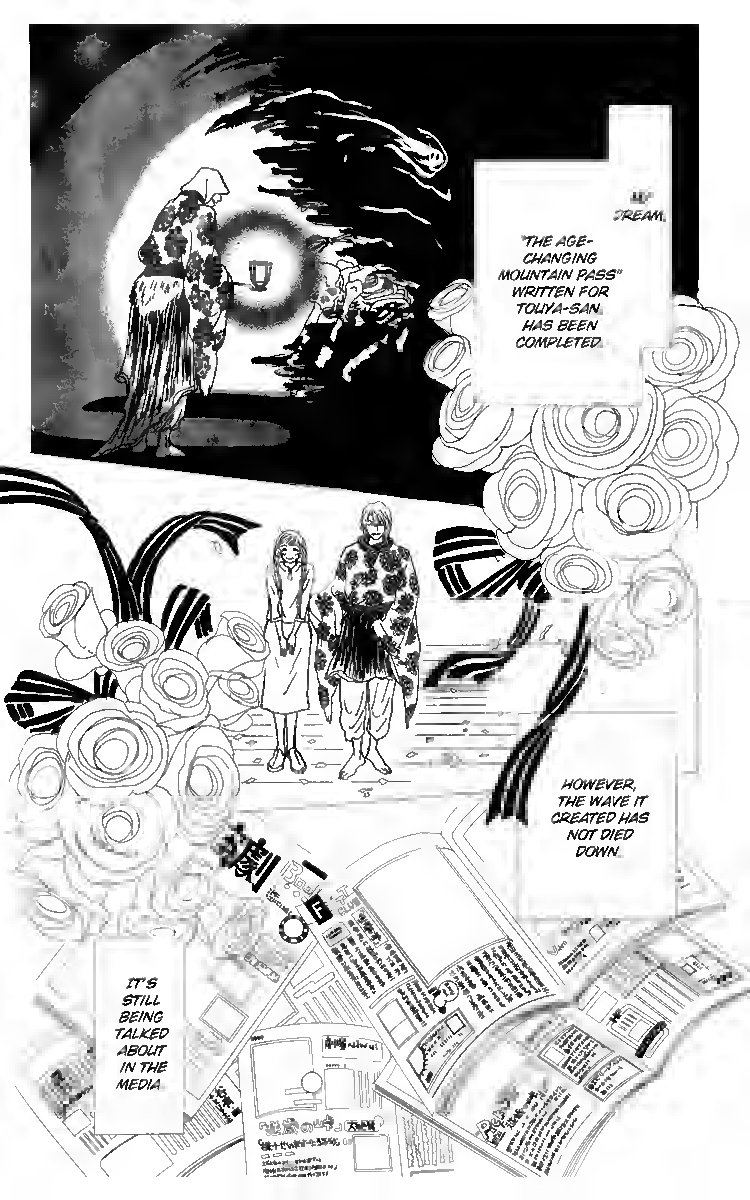
THAT "THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" WOULD BECOME THE SINGLE, RARE EVENT THAT CLOSED THE DISTANCE BETWEEN TOUYA-SAN AND ME,
AND THEN IN ONE STROKE, PULLED US FURTHER APART WAS SOMETHING I DID NOT FORESEE.

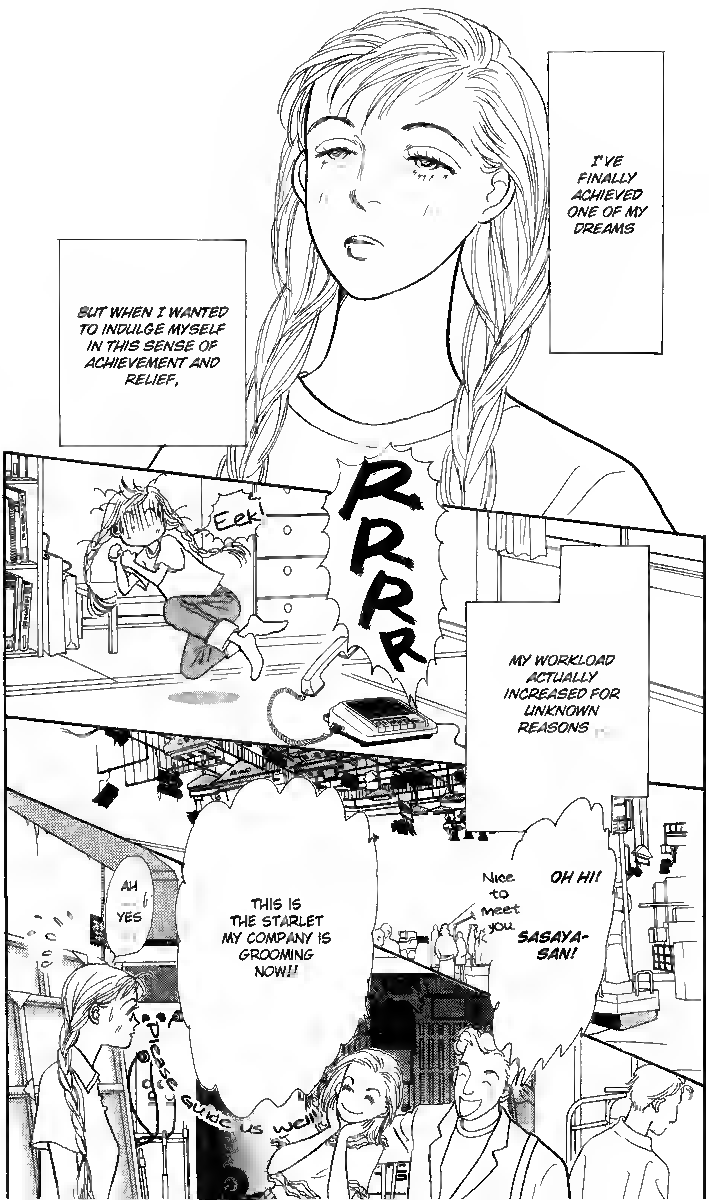
ASHITA NO OUSAMA

明日の王様

UNIT 52


Snap!
Snap!
AH!
NOT AGAIN!
PLEASE DON'T BE DISTRACTED BY THE PHOTOGRA-PHER...
ERM, SASAYA-SAN,
MY EYES JUST CLOSE ON THEIR OWN...
Snap!
AH, YES...
I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU ABOUT YOUR FUTURE PLANS.
I HAVEN'T THOUGHT THAT FAR.
GRANNY...

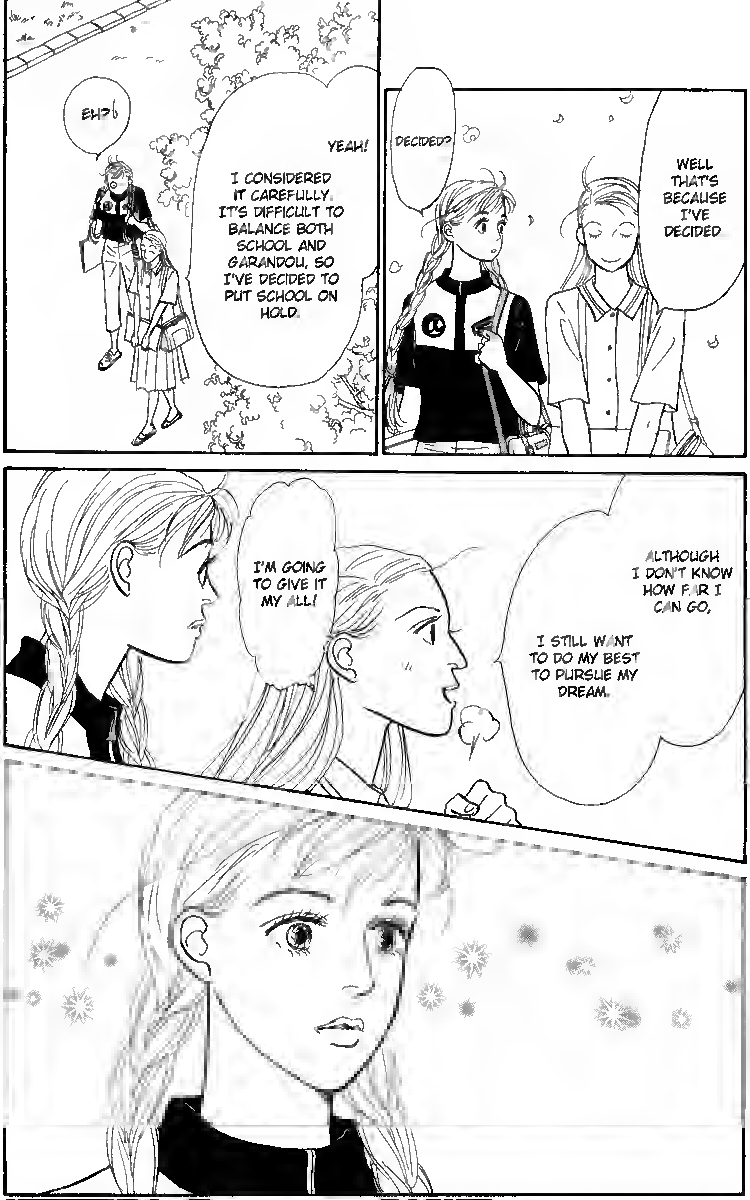

"THE AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" WRITTEN FOR TOUYA-SAN HAS BEEN COMPLETED.
HOWEVER, THE WAVE IT CREATED HAS NOT DIED DOWN.
IT'S STILL BEING TALKED ABOUT IN THE MEDIA.

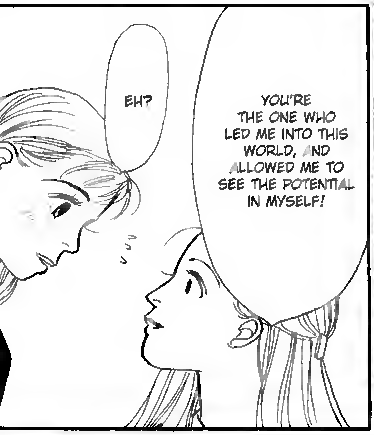

I'VE FINALLY ACHIEVED ONE OF MY DREAMS
BUT WHEN I WANTED TO INDULGE MYSELF IN THIS SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT AND RELIEF,
RRRR
Eek!
MY WORKLOAD ACTUALLY INCREASED FOR UNKNOWN REASONS
OH HI!
Nice to meet you
SASAYA-SAN!
THIS IS THE STARLET MY COMPANY IS GROOMING NOW!!
Aa i YES
Please guide us well!

Feel free to approach us for your next endeavor!
I'M EXHAUSTED
IF YOUR BODY CAN'T TAKE IT,
YOU HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO REFUSE.

You'll die!
YOU AGREED TO BE THE COLUMNIST FOR FIVE MAGAZINES, BUT YOU CAN'T BEAR THE EXHAUSTION?
I JUST CAN'T SAY NO...
IT'S NOT JUST THE CONSTANT PHONE CALLS; IT'S ALSO THE MEDIA POPPING UP EVERYWHERE TO TALK TO ME, AND THE BAFFLING MEETINGS I'M CALLED TO ATTEND...
Reflecting
SASAYA, MAYBE NOW'S NOT THE TIME, BUT...HAVE YOU CHECKED THE SCHOOL BULLETIN BOARD?
I SAY
IF YOU CAN'T DO IT, JUST REFUSE DIRECTLY! IF YOU SAY YES TO EVERYTHING JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE TOO EMBARRASSED TO SAY NO, YOUR BODY IS JUST GOING TO SUFFER.
I DIDN'T WANT TO ACCEPT, BUT THEY KEPT PLEADING, SO I RELUCTANTLY...
YOU... HAVEN'T SUBMITTED YOUR REPORT YET...
HUH?

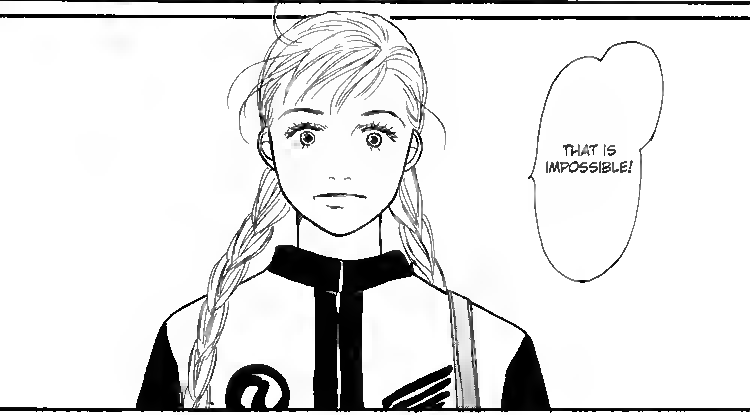
AH...!
LOST
BLANK
HA HA HA
...
DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE PASSED THE MARK? WEREN'T YOU BUSY WITH GARANDOU'S PUBLIC PERFORMANCE?
THIS IS GOING TO BE TOUGH FOR YOU. YOU HAVEN'T ACHIEVED THE ATTENDANCE PASSING MARK, RIGHT?

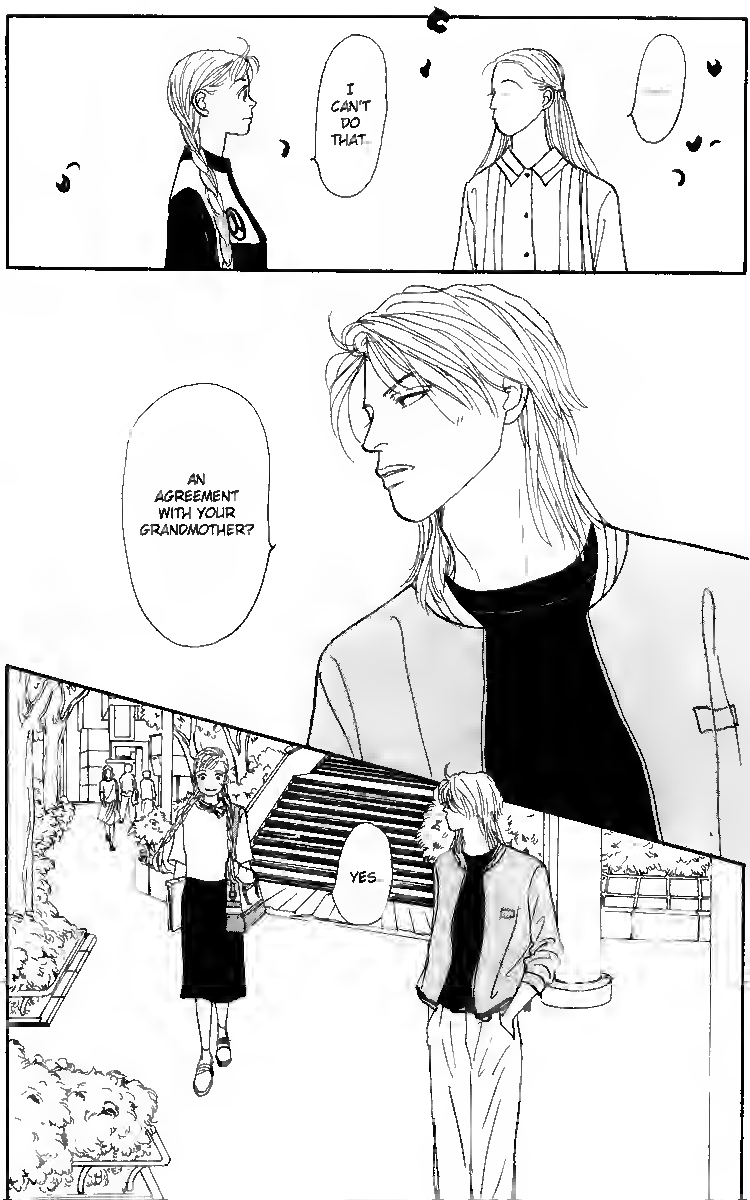

EH?!
YEAH!
I CONSIDERED IT CAREFULLY. IT'S DIFFICULT TO BALANCE BOTH SCHOOL AND GARANDOU, SO I'VE DECIDED TO PUT SCHOOL ON HOLD.
DECIDED?
WELL THAT'S BECAUSE I'VE DECIDED
I'M GOING TO GIVE IT MY ALL!
ALTHOUGH I DON'T KNOW HOW FAR I CAN GO,
I STILL WANT TO DO MY BEST TO PURSUE MY DREAM.

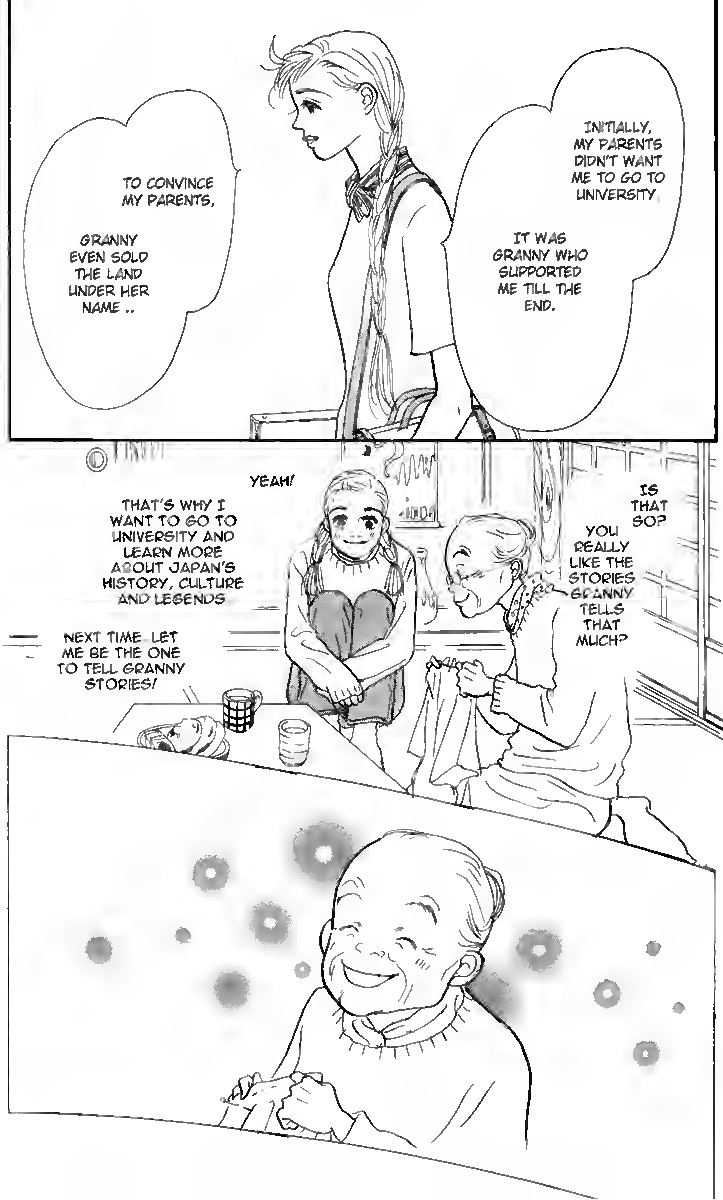

EH?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO LED ME INTO THIS WORLD, AND ALLOWED ME TO SEE THE POTENTIAL IN MYSELF!

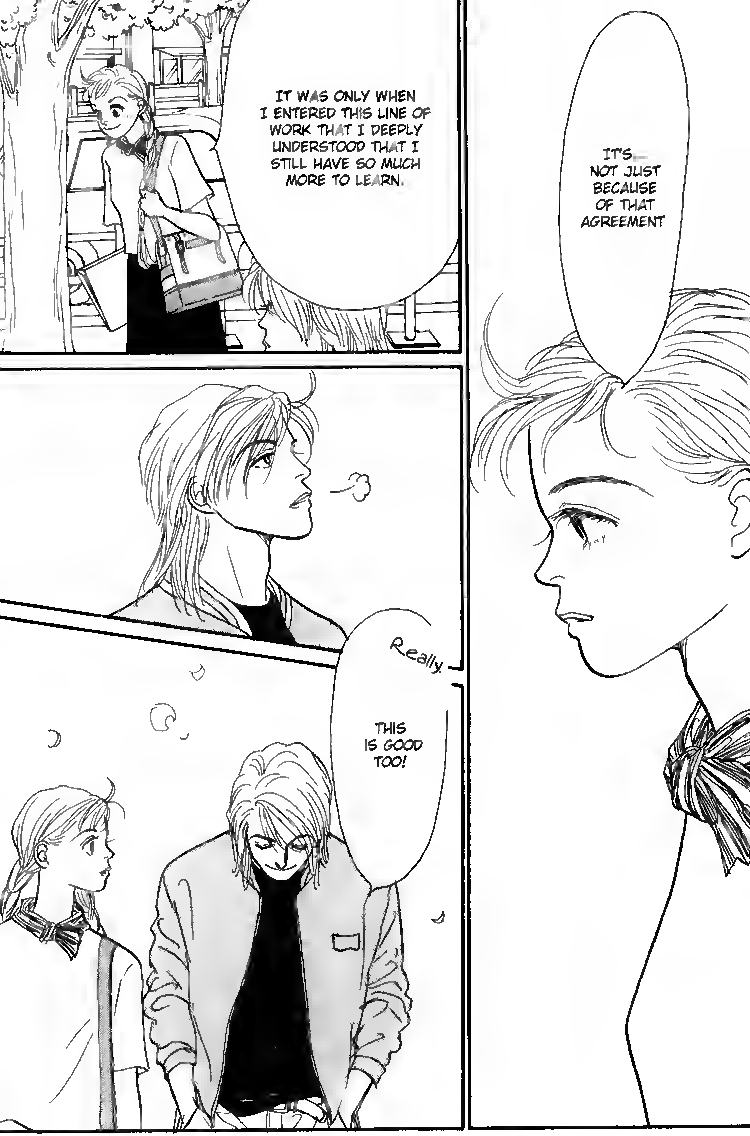
EH?
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU!

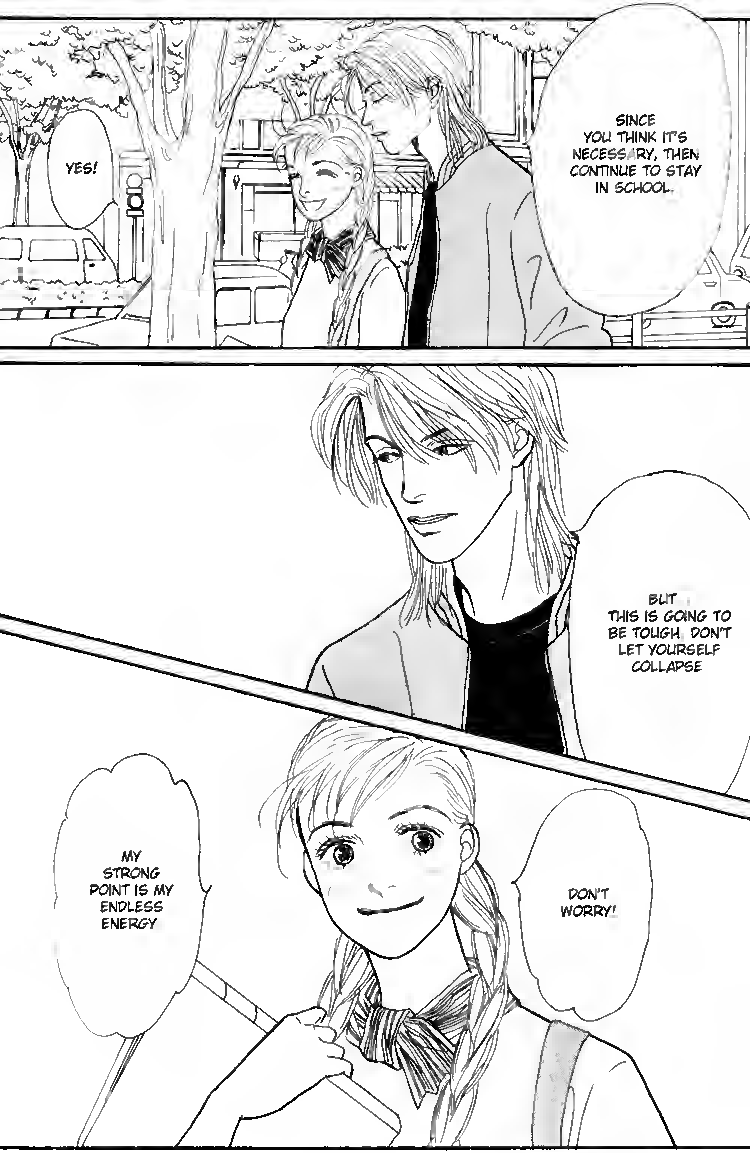
Shakes head
SHOULDN'T YOU STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS STILL HOT?
YOU'VE ALREADY GAINED RECOGNITION IN THIS WORLD YOU'RE A FULL-FLEDGED SCRIPTWRITER-CUM-DIRECTOR NOW
YOU MIGHT AS WELL PUT SCHOOL ON HOLD


THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE!


I CAN'T DO THAT.
AN AGREEMENT WITH YOUR GRANDMOTHER?
YES.


INITIALLY, MY PARENTS DIDN'T WANT ME TO GO TO UNIVERSITY.
IT WAS GRANNY WHO SUPPORTED ME TILL THE END.
TO CONVINCE MY PARENTS,
GRANNY EVEN SOLD THE LAND UNDER HER NAME ..
IS THAT SO?
YOU REALLY LIKE THE STORIES GRANNY TELLS THAT MUCH?
YEAH!
THAT'S WHY I WANT TO GO TO UNIVERSITY AND LEARN MORE ABOUT JAPAN'S HISTORY, CULTURE AND LEGENDS
NEXT TIME, LET ME BE THE ONE TO TELL GRANNY STORIES!


IT WAS ONLY WHEN I ENTERED THIS LINE OF WORK THAT I DEEPLY UNDERSTOOD THAT I STILL HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO LEARN.
IT'S... NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THAT AGREEMENT
Really
THIS IS GOOD TOO!

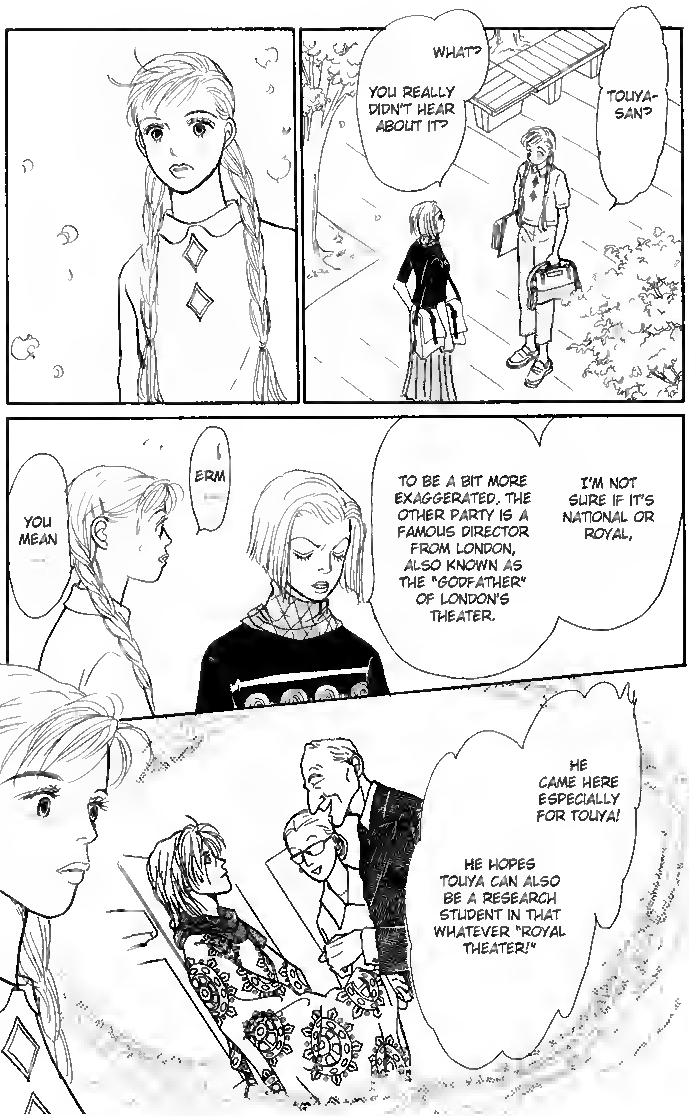

YES!
SINCE YOU THINK IT'S NECESSARY, THEN CONTINUE TO STAY IN SCHOOL.
BUT THIS IS GOING TO BE TOUGH. DON'T LET YOURSELF COLLAPSE
DON'T WORRY!
MY STRONG POINT IS MY ENDLESS ENERGY

**
**
THERE'RE STILL LOADS OF BOOKS I HAVE NOT READ—
THE FIRST THING I HAVE TO SETTLE IS THE REPORT TO BE SUBMITTED NEXT WEEK...
IT'S REALLY HARD ON YOU...
Hahaha

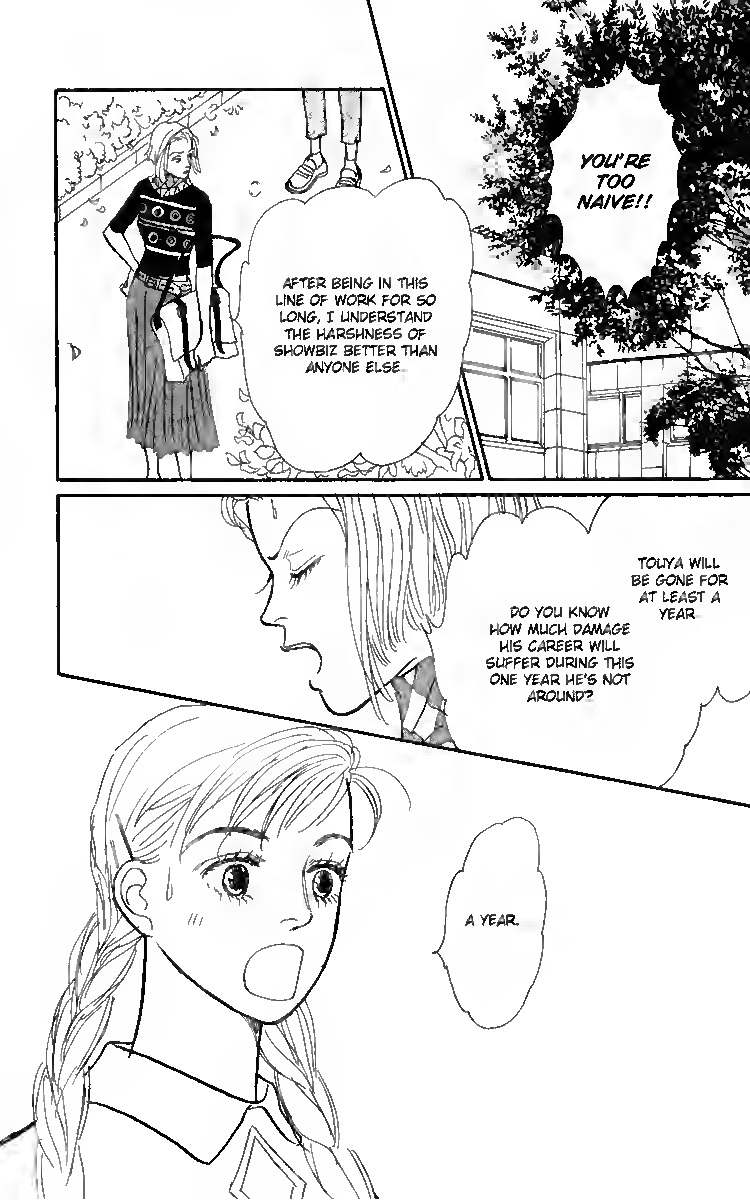
TOUYA-SAN DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING...
AH?
I HAVE SOMETHING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT WHY DON'T WE..
DON'T TELL ME HE ALSO HAS TO REFUSE SOME JOBS. THAT'S WHY HE WANTED TO TALK WITH ME?
IS HE GOING TO ACT IN A NEW TV SERIAL?
OR A STAGE PLAY?
IN THE END, HE HAD TO LISTEN TO ME TALK NONSTOP ABOUT SCHOOL.

YEAH!
GRANNY! I'LL WORK HARD. I WON'T ADMIT DEFEAT SO EASILY!
KINA-SAN?
YOU! WHAT'RE YOU DOING IN THIS KIND OF PLACE?!
WHAT AM I DOING? I HAVE A REPORT TO WRITE...
HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS HERE? DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?

HA HA
I'VE BEEN RUSHING A REPORT LATELY,
SO I'VE BEEN AVOIDING THE PHONE
OBVIOUSLY I APPROACHED GARANDOU FOR YOUR HOUSE NUMBER, WHICH I CALLED HUNDREDS OF TIMES. WHEN NO ONE ANSWERED, I HAD TO COME HERE PERSONALLY.
REPORT?!
HOW CAN YOU FIND THE TIME TO DO SUCH MEANINGLESS THINGS NOW!?

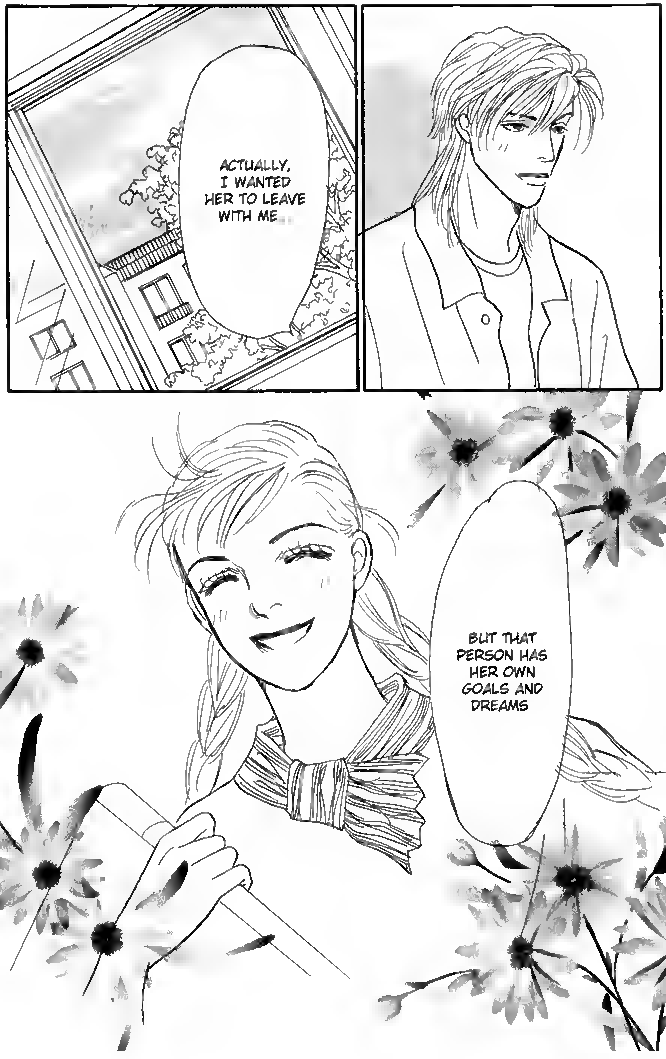

TOUYA-SAN?
WHAT?
YOU REALLY DIDN'T HEAR ABOUT IT?
ERM
YOU MEAN
I'M NOT SURE IF IT'S NATIONAL OR ROYAL,
TO BE A BIT MORE EXAGGERATED. THE OTHER PARTY IS A FAMOUS DIRECTOR FROM LONDON, ALSO KNOWN AS THE "GODFATHER" OF LONDON'S THEATER.
HE CAME HERE ESPECIALLY FOR TOUYA!
HE HOPES TOUYA CAN ALSO BE A RESEARCH STUDENT IN THAT WHATEVER "ROYAL THEATER!"

Glare!
So that's how it is
SO... SO AMAZING
AMAZING—?
ARE YOU JOKING?! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT RIGHT NOW IS TOUYA'S MOST IMPORTANT PHASE!
I know!
SO DOESN'T THIS GREAT OPPORTUNITY ARRIVE AT A GOOD TIME?


YOU'RE TOO NAIVE!!
AFTER BEING IN THIS LINE OF WORK FOR SO LONG, I UNDERSTAND THE HARSHNESS OF SHOWBIZ BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE.
TOUYA WILL BE GONE FOR AT LEAST A YEAR.
DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH DAMAGE HIS CAREER WILL SUFFER DURING THIS ONE YEAR HE'S NOT AROUND?
A YEAR.

IF I REALLY GO TWO OR THREE YEARS SHOULDN'T REALLY MATTER, RIGHT?
NO, I'LL JUST STAY IN THE THEATER COMPANY FOR ONE YEAR.
THEN I'LL TRAVEL AROUND
ACTUALLY, I'VE ALWAYS LOOKED FORWARD TO DOING "SHOUGO'S GRAND JOURNEY"
DON'T COMPARE US
GET THIS STRAIGHT. IF YOU REALLY DISAPPEAR FROM JAPAN FOR SO LONG, ALL THAT YOU'VE ACHIEVED SO FAR WILL PROBABLY DISAPPEAR

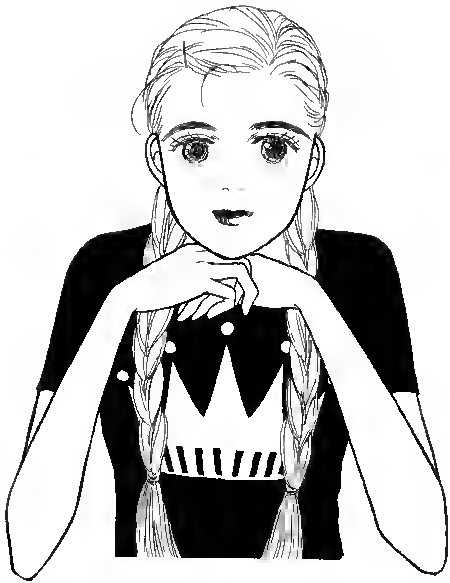
THEN I'LL JUST START FROM SCRATCH AGAIN
Hmm?
DO YOU HOLD THE SAME BELIEF ABOUT HER?

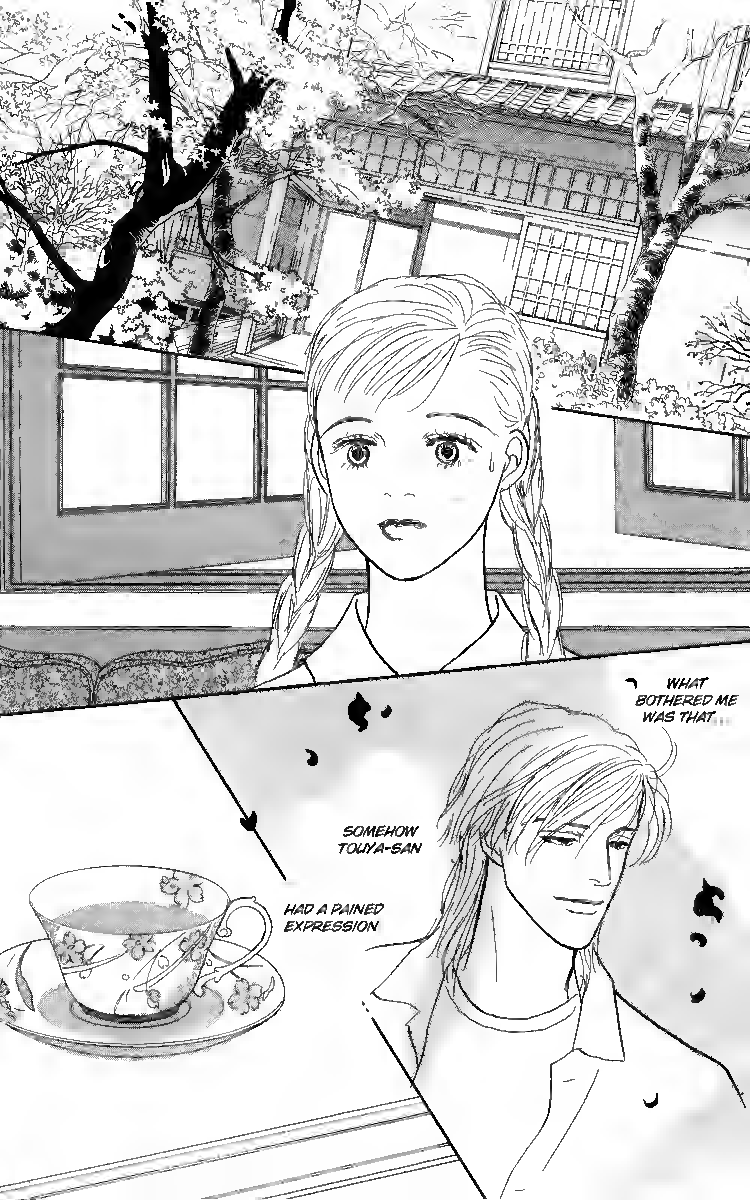

ACTUALLY, I WANTED HER TO LEAVE WITH ME...
BUT THAT PERSON HAS HER OWN GOALS AND DREAMS

I CAN ONLY RELY ON YOU NOW
I WON'T BE ABLE TO TALK HIM OUT OF IT
YOU MUST STOP HIM!
YOU CAN'T LET TOUYA LEAVE!"

Ashita no Ousama UNIT 52 - End

ASHITA NO OUSAMA
明日の王様
UNIT 53

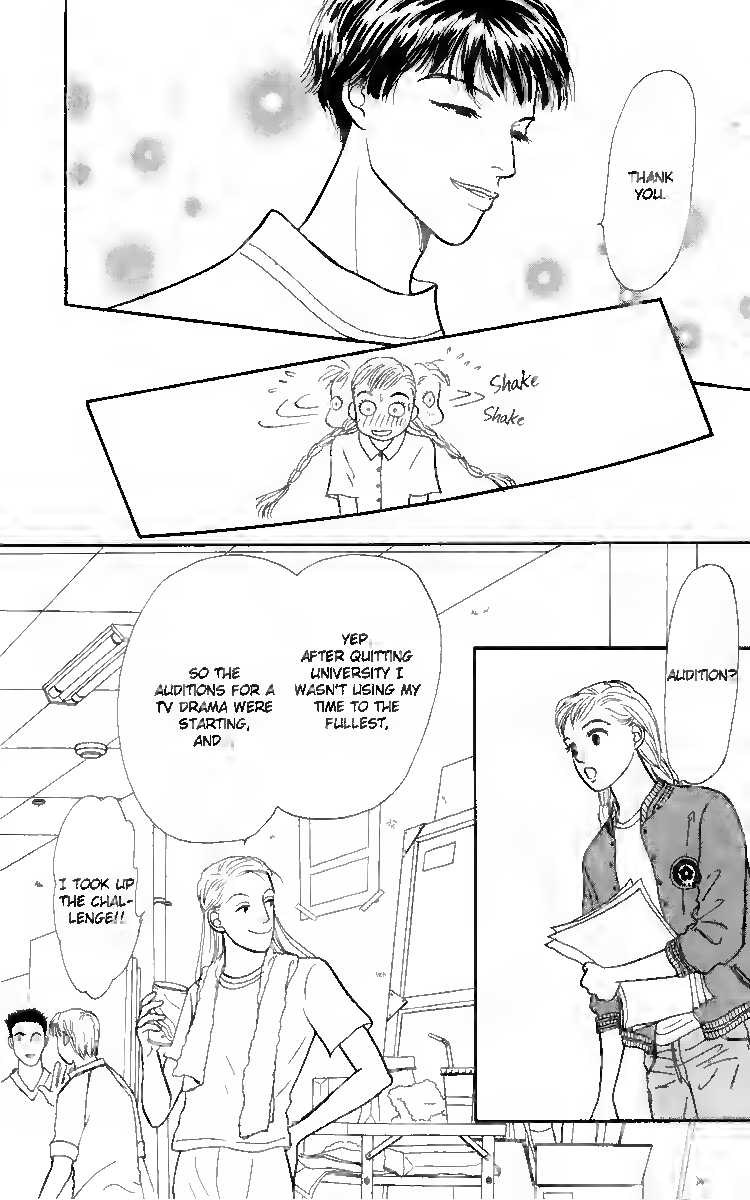



WHAT BOTHERED ME WAS THAT...
SOMEHOW TOUYA-SAN
HAD A PAINED EXPRESSION

YUU-SAN ARE YOU LISTENING?
I HAVE THIS AMAZING, REALLY BIG PART COMING UP
SO AS I WAS SAYING,
UH—
YES!
AH

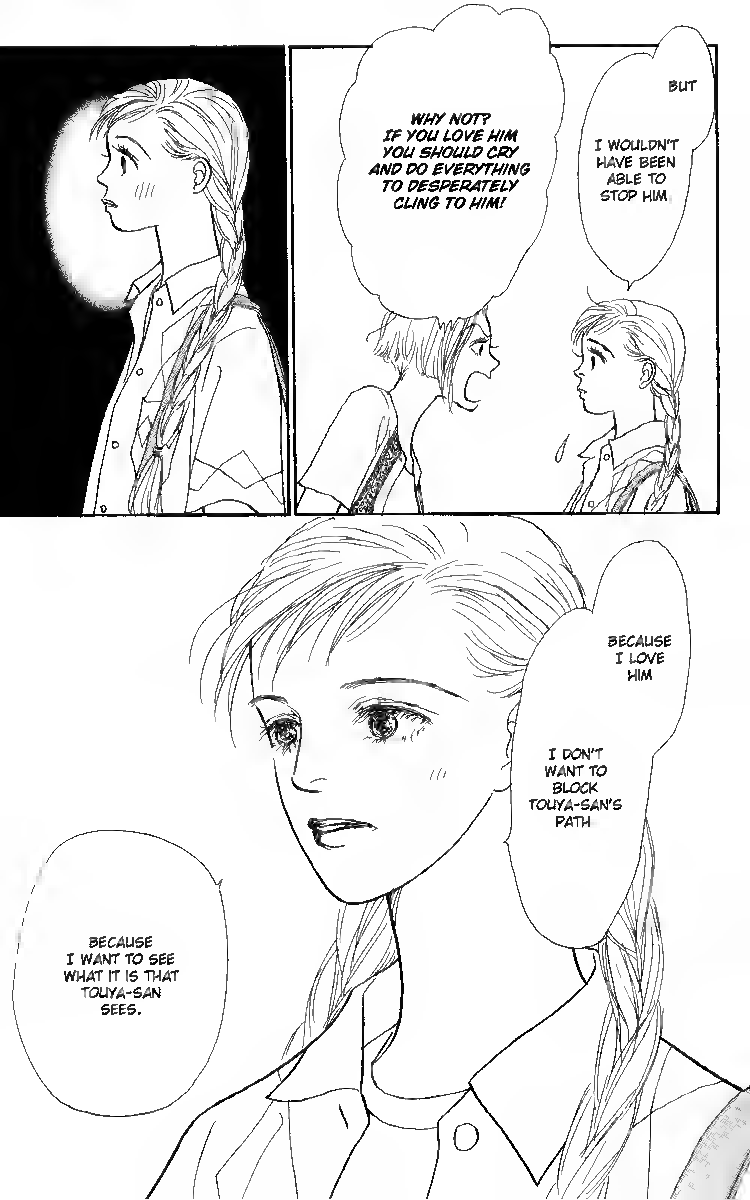
I THINK THIS ROLE
HAS MY FUTURE AS AN ACTOR RESTING ON IT.
IT'S THE ROLE OF A PRINCESS WHO, FOR THE SAKE OF LOVE, SEDUCES THE NARUKAMI HERMIT
IN OTHER WORDS, THERE WAS NO HEART, NOTHING REAL.
UNTIL NOW I WAS ALWAYS TOLD I WAS LIKE A DOLL.
BUT
RECENTLY I'VE STARTED TO HEAR OTHER THINGS FROM PEOPLE AROUND ME.
RECENTLY FUJINOSUKE HAS BEEN SHOWING SOME COLOR
I— I NOW HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT I CAN PLAY THE CLOUD PRINCESS TAEMA

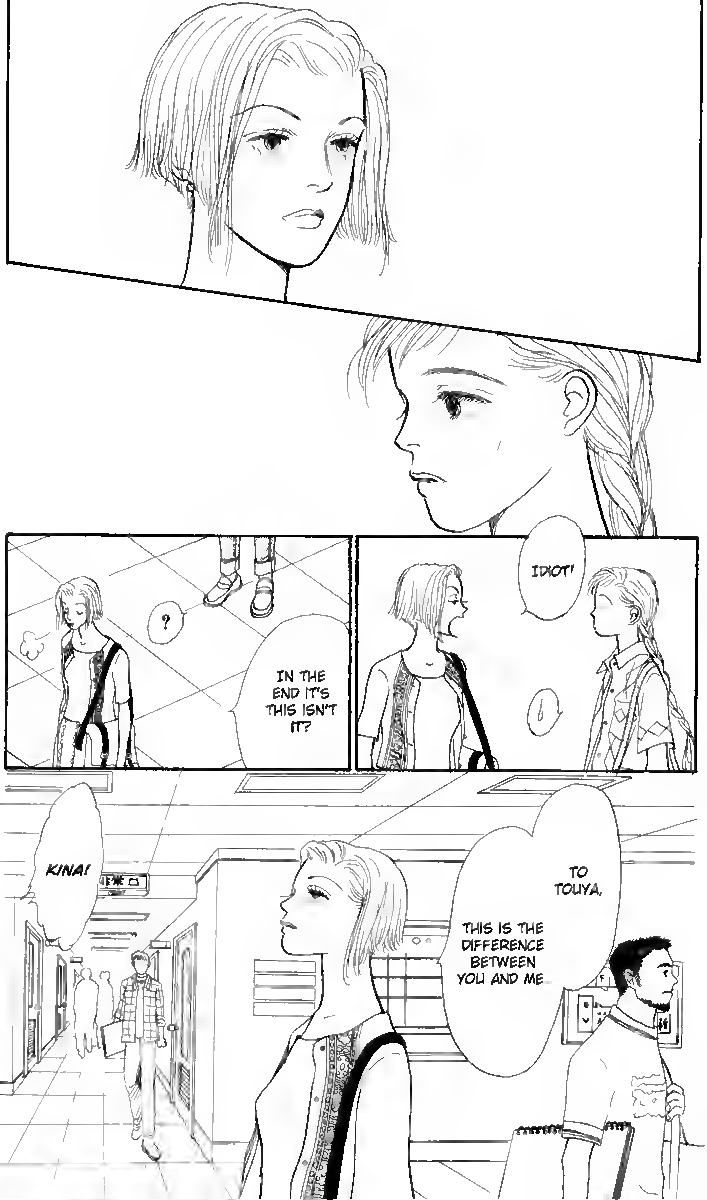
AMAZING.
ISN'T THAT WONDERFUL!
THIS, TOO,
IS BECAUSE OF YOU. I AM GRATEFUL.
NO WAY
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING.
IT'S FUJINOSUKE-SAN'S OWN ABILITY.


THANK YOU.
Shake
Shake
ALUDITION?
YEP. AFTER QUITTING UNIVERSITY I WASN'T USING MY TIME TO THE FULLEST.
SO THE AUDITIONS FOR A TV DRAMA WERE STARTING, AND
I TOOK UP THE CHAL-LENGE!!

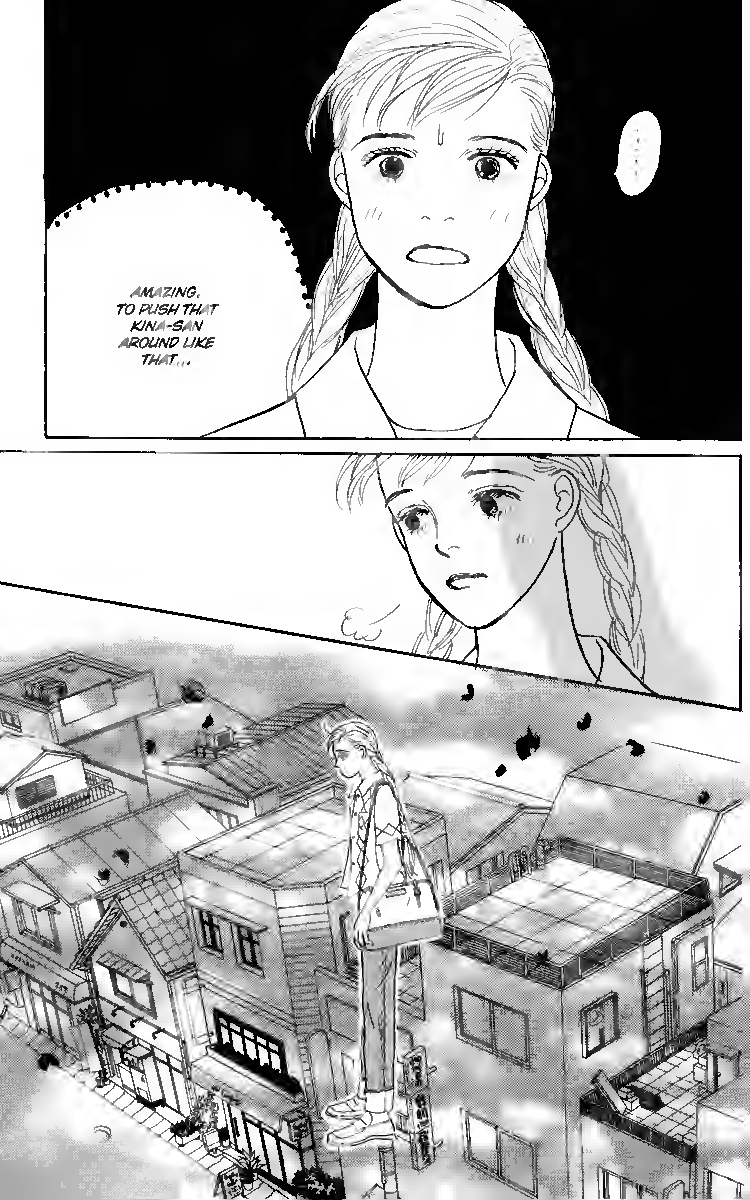
'WOW' IS RIGHT.
WOW!
MAKES YOU THINK 'JUST MAYBE' DOESN'T IT?
AND THEN!
EVEN THOUGH I TOOK IT CAUSE I HAD NOTHING TO LOSE, I MADE IT TO THE SECOND ROUND!
THANK YOU.
GIVE IT YOUR BEST, OHARA-SAN
IF IT GOES WELL, I COULD EVEN END UP BEING A REGULAR ON TV
IT REALLY IS 'WOW'!

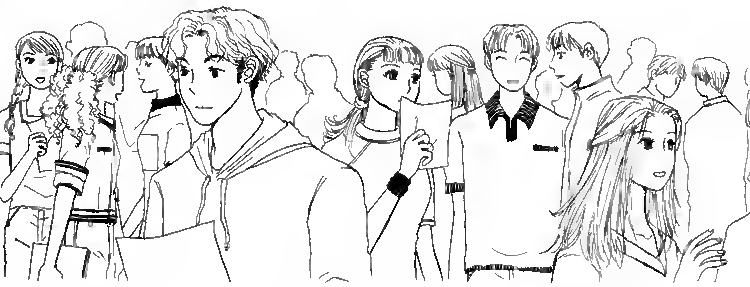
USELESS!
HM?
WHY DO YOU THINK I EVEN ASKED YOU?
AND DESPITE THAT...IT SEEMS THAT TOUYA ACCEPTED THE POSITION IN LONDON.
USE-LESS!

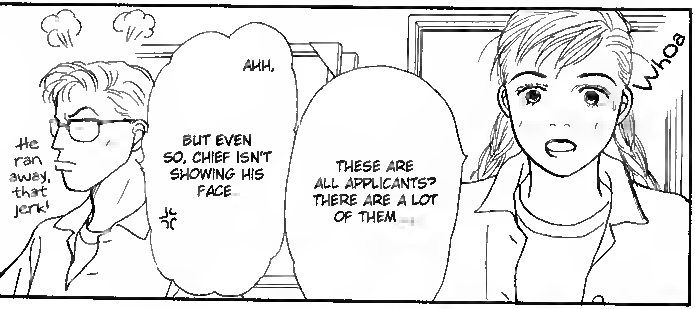

WHY NOT? IF YOU LOVE HIM YOU SHOULD CRY AND DO EVERYTHING TO DESPERATELY CLING TO HIM!
BUT
I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO STOP HIM
BECAUSE I LOVE HIM
I DON'T WANT TO BLOCK TOUYA-SAN'S PATH
BECAUSE I WANT TO SEE WHAT IT IS THAT TOUYA-SAN SEES.

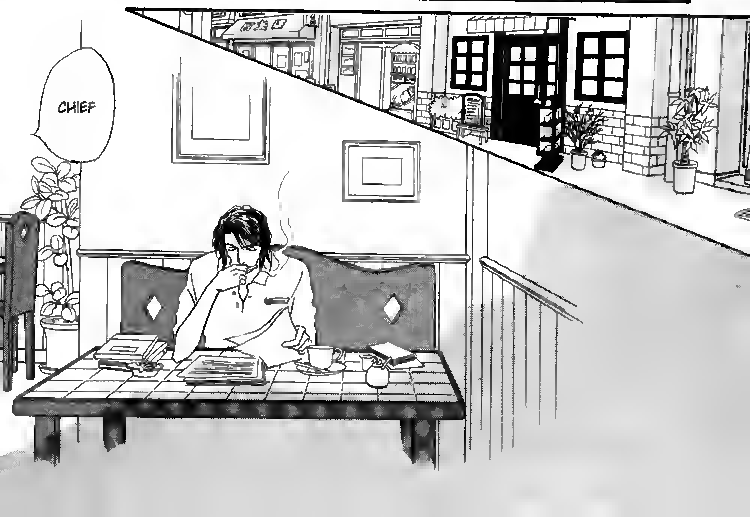

IN THE END IT'S THIS ISN'T IT?
?
IDIOT!
KINA!
TO TOUYA,
THIS IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOU AND ME

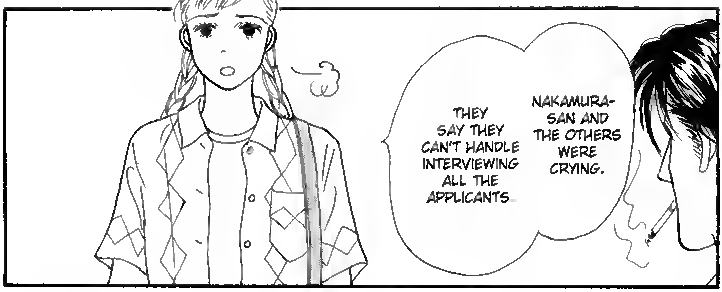
WHO'S THAT?
IT'S THE GIRL I'VE BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF RECENTLY. REALLY STUCK UP AND UNPLEASANT.
AGAIN...
HE WON'T LISTEN TO A THING I SAY!!
DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT STYLIST.
YES YES.
KINA, YOU LISTENING?
BUT SHE HAS A PRETTY INTERESTING CHARACTER


AMAZING. TO PUSH THAT KINA-SAN AROUND LIKE THAT...




Whoa
THESE ARE ALL APPLICANTS? THERE ARE A LOT OF THEM
AHH,
BUT EVEN SO, CHIEF ISN'T SHOWING HIS FACE
He ran away, that jerk!

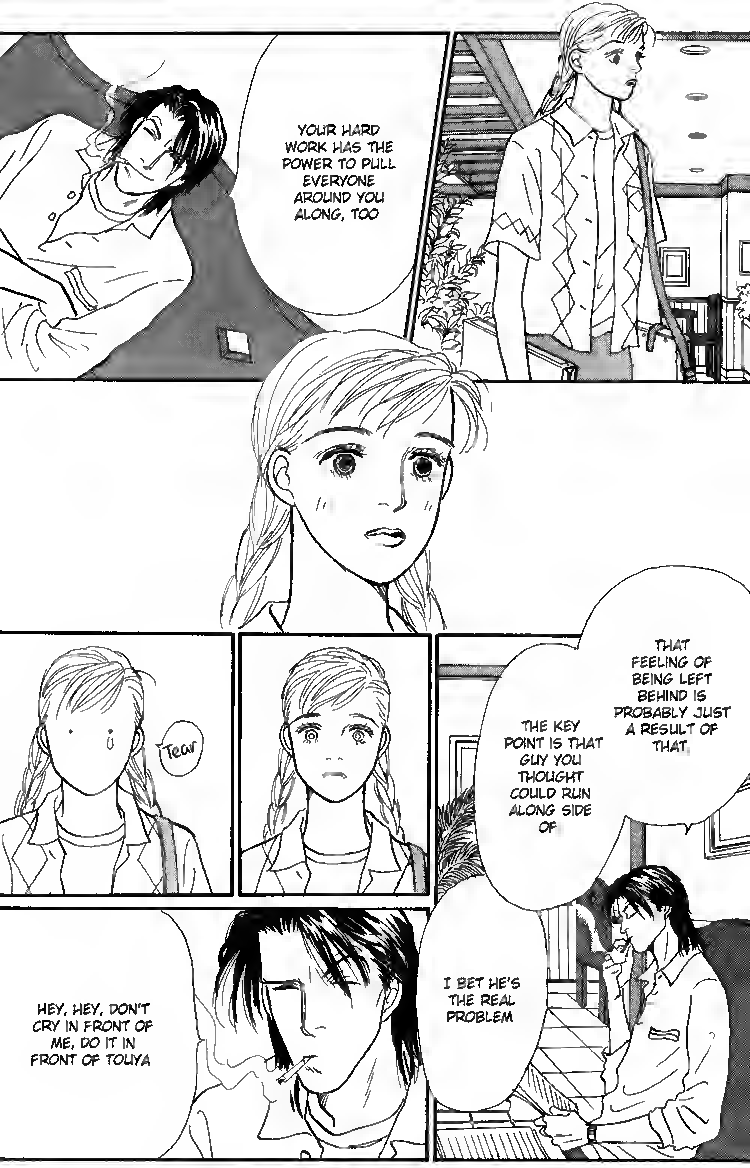

CHIEF


NAKAMURA-SAN AND THE OTHERS WERE CRYING.
THEY SAY THEY CAN'T HANDLE INTERVIEWING ALL THE APPLICANTS.

LEAVE THEM BE.
IF THEY CAN'T HANDLE SOMETHING LIKE THAT, A PLAY IS IMPOSSIBLE.
AGAIN WITH THAT IRRESPON-SIBLE ATTITUDE.

"RESPONSI-BILITY IS SHARED WITH ALL."
THAT'S MY MOTTO
CHIEF...
WHAT SHOULD I DO FROM NOW ON?

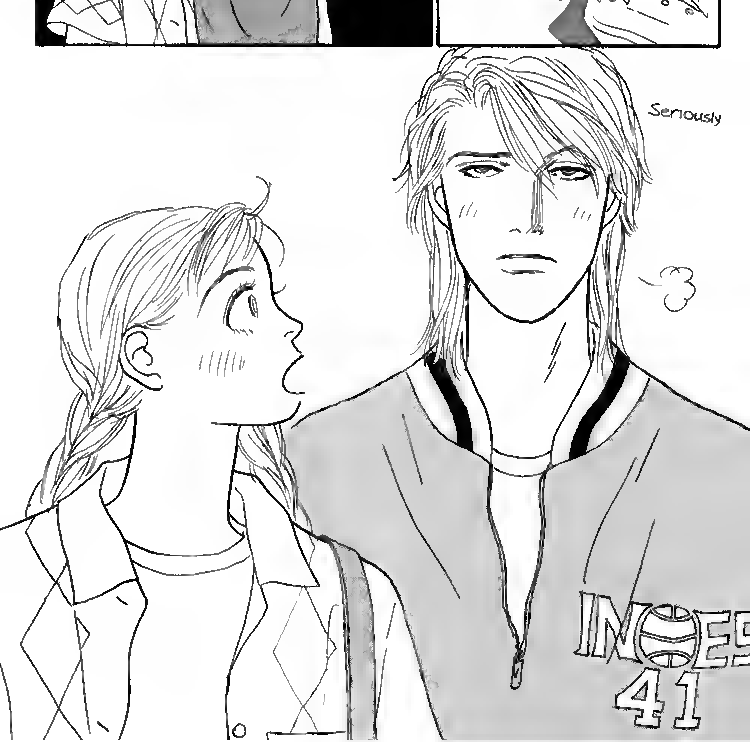
I...
RIGHT NOW, I FEEL LIKE I'M IN SUCH A HURRY,
BUT...
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS I'M HURRYING TO DO...
I FEEL LIKE I AM GOING TO BE LEFT BEHIND...
FUJINOSUKE-SAN, OHARA-SAN KINA-SAN —
EVERYONE HAS STARTED MOVING FORWARD AND YET I...
WHO'S THE ONE WHO GOT THEM ALL GOING DOING TALKING LIKE THAT?


YOUR HARD WORK HAS THE POWER TO PULL EVERYONE AROUND YOU ALONG, TOO
Tear
HEY, HEY, DON'T CRY IN FRONT OF ME, DO IT IN FRONT OF TOUYA
I BET HE'S THE REAL PROBLEM
THE KEY POINT IS THAT GUY YOU THOUGHT COULD RUN ALONG SIDE OF
THAT FEELING OF BEING LEFT BEHIND IS PROBABLY JUST A RESULT OF THAT

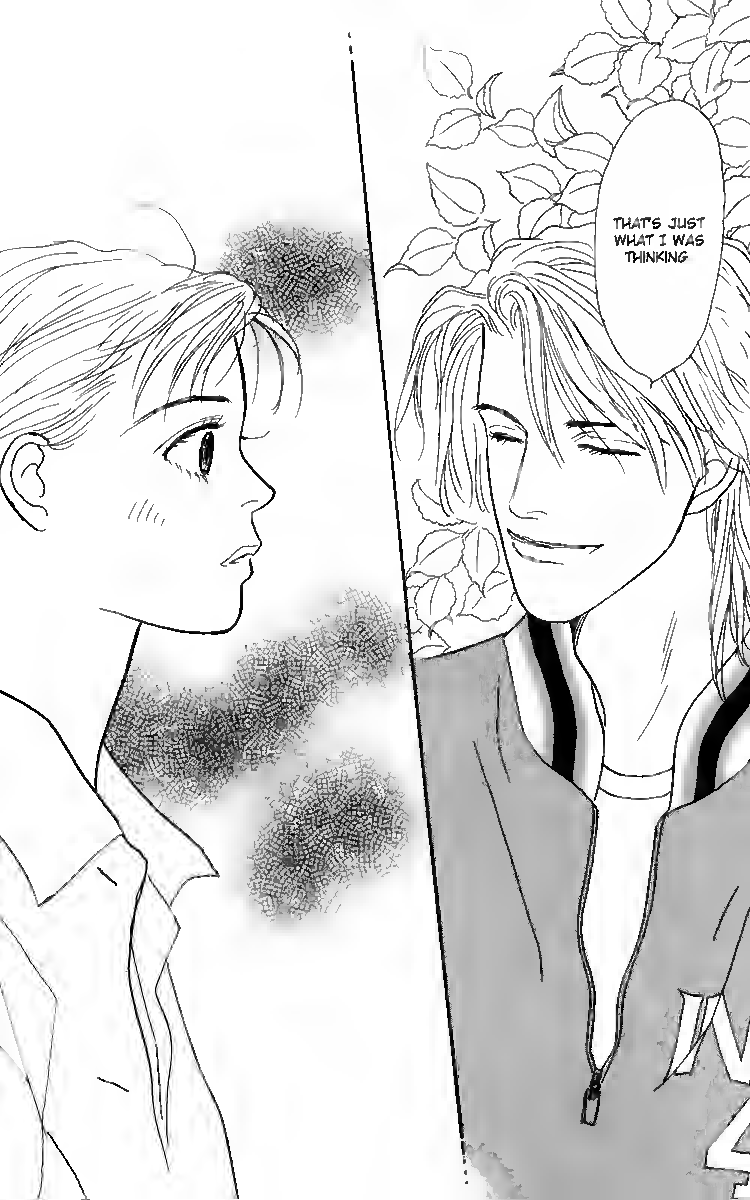
YOU'RE SURE?
VERY SURE!
NO,
I WON'T CRY IN FRONT OF TOUYA-SAN
Definitely not!
rub
rub
!
NOT CUTE AT ALL

Ah, you told

If I remember it right
IT'S THAT UNCLITE PERSON RIGHT THERE THAT YOU WANTED TO BRING WITH YOU TO ENGLAND


Seriously
41

WELL, YOU SEE...
I HEARD WHAT YOU WERE SAYING THAT TIME.
SO IT'S FINE.
IT...
IT...
"IT'S FINE"...?
THE THINGS I AM GOING TO SEE FROM NOW ON,
I WANTED YOU TO SEE THEM TOO.


THAT'S JUST WHAT I WAS THINKING

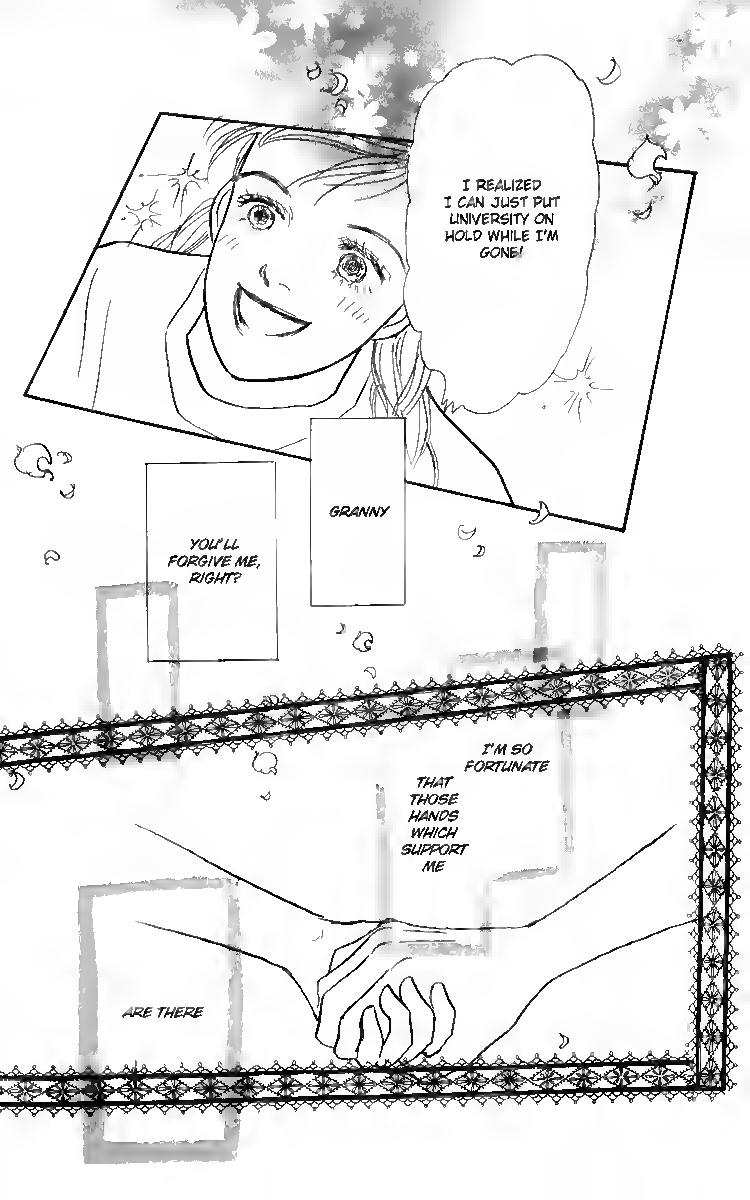
GRANNY
GRANNY!
I DO WANT TO SEE THEM.

THE THINGS TULYA SAN WILL SEE
THE THINGS THAT I WILL SEE!
THE THINGS WE WILL SEE TOGETHER!!

THE DREAMS THAT WILL WE SEE TOGETHER.
I WANT TO GO
WITH YOU
TOGETHER.

I WANT TO GO!

CHIEF—!
OH, KAZUMA-SAN HELLO.
HEY, YUU-CHAN I HEARD YOUR "AGE-CHANGING MOUNTAIN PASS" IS IN THE RUNNING FOR THE PLAY OF THE YEAR
OH, IS THAT SO?
JUST A "IS THAT SO" ..?
CHIEF
CHIEF, YOU SAID IT BEFORE, DIDN'T YOU? YOU CAN STUDY PLAYS ABROAD, TOO, RIGHT?
THAT APPLIES TO LONDON, TOO, RIGHT?
WHAT SORT OF DOCUMENTS AND PROCEDURES
Hey! Hey!


I REALIZED I CAN JUST PUT UNIVERSITY ON HOLD WHILE I'M GONE!
GRANNY
YOU'LL FORGIVE ME, RIGHT?
I'M SO FORTUNATE
THAT THOSE HANDS WHICH SUPPORT ME
ARE THERE

THAT PATH WILL MAKE US KINGS*
AND SOMEDAY,
TOMORROW* OPENS THE PATH ONWARDS,
JUST AS TODAY BECOMES TOMORROW,
SO I CAN KEEP WALKING STRAIGHT AHEAD

T/N: Tomorrow: Ashita
Kings: Ousama

Ashita no Ousama - End

Trendy E·B·I

Trendy postscript ♡

Up until now I've seen many different plays and I have enjoyed and gotten something out of each one of them. Now and then there were things that puzzled me, but even then the strength and passion of the actors was fully transmitted. This must be what it is to enjoy seeing plays.

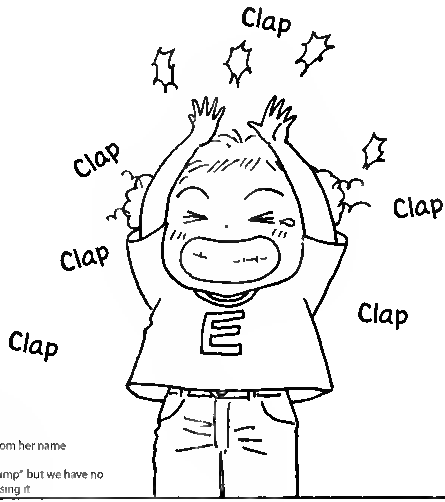
There were times when I was surprised by how different the same actor was on stage compared to on TV. I was overwhelmed by their raw force.

After the play ends, my hands are red and hurting from clapping so hard. I'm always happy when there's a standing ovation for the flushed and sweaty faces on stage at curtain call.

I started this work knowing nothing about theatre, but if it sparked even a little interest in the stage, I'll be very happy.

To everyone who stayed with me, thank you very much!

Yachi Ebiko



T/N: Ehi comes from her name (Emiko > Ebiko)
Ebiko means "shrimp" but we have no idea why she is using it

(End)

Hi, I joined the project really late when I noticed that they were calling for translators and it was almost finished! So I thought it would be a shame to let it stall like that after getting it so far (I remember reading chapters 1-36 in one night, then applying immediately after) and ended up joining. I loved this manga because of the great pacing and characters - plus, the romantic angle is actually quite unconventional (in a career-before-love way, but it developed nicely in the background anyway) I hope you guys loved it too

-maaru

Really glad to be part of this project. I offered to help because I love this manga and I'm sort of a theater fan. It's been fun to translate this manga and I hope to do more translating work in the future! Thanks to the group for letting me take part!

-Jing Yun

Working on this project was so much fun! It truly made me a lifelong fan of Yachi Emiko-san's works

-Maverick

I really love Ashita. I even tried to expand 1 year's worth of Japanese knowledge into 5 by trying to translate it when there was no one to do so. I failed miserably. Still, I worked for Wingtip and learned a lot. Now, I'm the QCer? I feel blessed. I hope my work has been good enough for everyone. I hope to read more manga like this with such fleshed out personalities and women with actual goals and real life mistakes.

-Kilimonian

That was a lot of fun, thank you for giving me the opportunity to work on this project. I've lost count of how many times I've reread this manga over the course of working on it (and I'm currently reading it again) > >.

Ben

Good job team ^.^ The manga is one of the best in this genre. Yuu is cute, but not irritating heroine. Good story-line. Lovely Touya san. BUT! *looks around at other staff* Chief is mine!" MWAHAHA!

-goldhair

One of the greatest manga! I was so sad when the publisher here went out of business. Thanks to the staff, I finally had a chance to read it till the end *happy sigh*

And Chief Shimamura is way cooler than Touya no matter what anyone says XD

-Chihaya